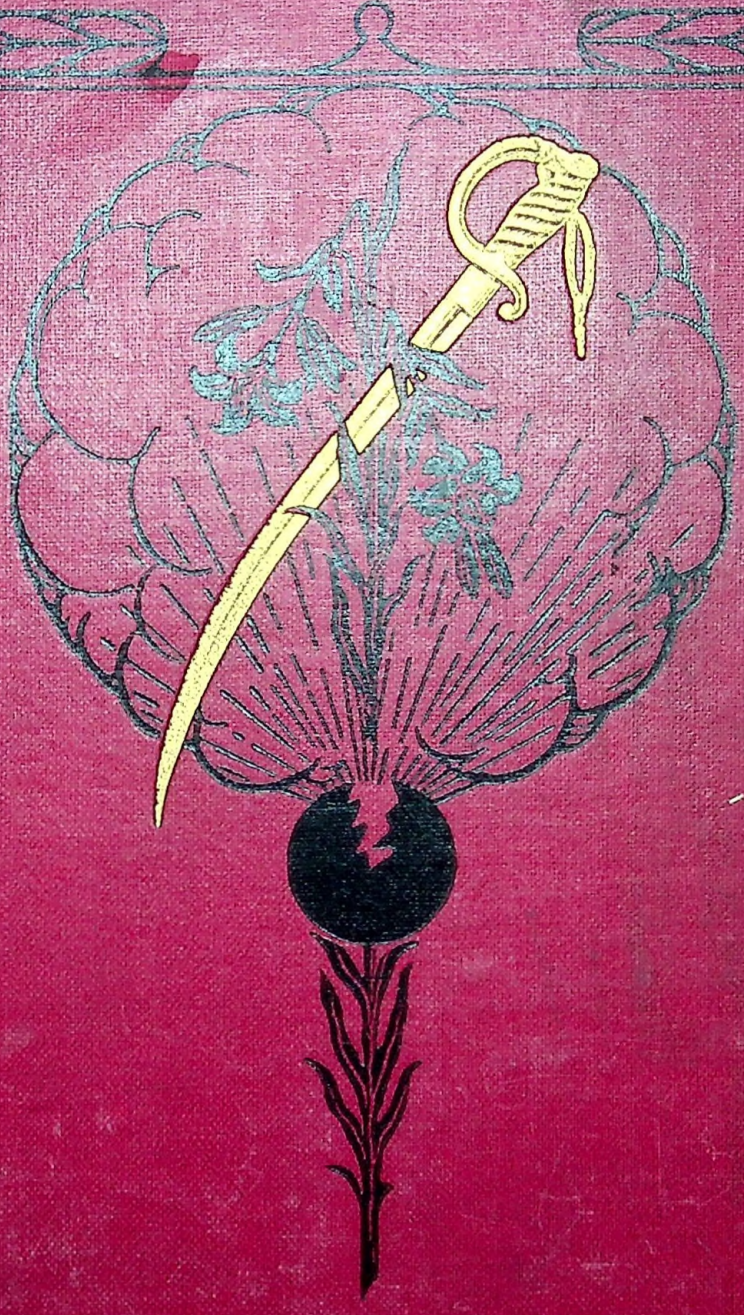
THE HISTORY OF THE GREAT EUROPEAN WAR



THE HISTORY OF THE
GREAT EUROPEAN WAR

TYPES OF THE INDIAN ARMY.

SEPOYS.
2ND GÚRKHA RIFLES.

4TH DO.
(SERVICE KIT.)

SOWAR (SIKH).
11TH BENGAL LANCERS.

SEPOYS.
15TH LUDHIANA SIKHS.

26TH PUNJABIS (PATHAN).

THE HISTORY OF THE GREAT EUROPEAN WAR

ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS

BY

W. STANLEY MACBEAN KNIGHT

AUTHOR OF
"THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF BELGIUM IN EUROPEAN WARFARE"
"THE ZOLLVEREIN," ETC. ETC.

ASSISTED BY EMINENT NAVAL AND MILITARY EXPERTS

VOLUME III

LONDON
CAXTON PUBLISHING COMPANY, LIMITED
CLUN HOUSE, SURREY STREET, W.C.

CONTENTS

BOOK III

THE CAMPAIGN OF THE ALLIES—Continued

CHAPTER X

IN THE DEPTHS

Paris and the Great Retreat—How London received the news—Would the Germans reach Paris?—Unanimous British decision to help to throw the enemy out of France and Belgium—Speech of Mr. Asquith—Speech of Lord Rosebery—Social conditions of the Empire are transformed by the war—In France—The fortifications of Paris—The defences of the city were complete—Paris under a Military Governor—Manifesto of the French Government—Its removal from the capital—Scenes at the departure—Preparations for a siege—The cattle in the parks—New city regulations—Effect on trade and life—The Germans contribute to the liveliness of the city—Refugees from the provinces—The exodus—The enemy's aeroplanes—Bombs dropped near the railway station—The Parisians not frightened—Remarkable literature also dropped—Women and children injured and killed by bombs—Enemy aeroplane raids become still more vindictive—Attempts against Notre Dame—The diabolical crime of a Sunday—Object of these raids—The French soldiers restive under the retreat—German intentions with regard to Paris . . . . . pp. 1–19

CHAPTER XI

THE BATTLE OF THE MARNE

British chafing at retreat—Their officers' assurance—General von Kluck turns eastward—Critical position—He might be enveloped—*The British and French make a stand*—The time has arrived—They take the offensive—And dispose themselves to attack the rear and flanks of von Kluck's army—Memorable Orders of the Day—September 6—The great battle commences—Positions of the opposing armies—British movements on first day of battle—Disposition of opposing armies at close of day—Numbers of men engaged—General Joffre—Germans concentrate upon Esternay—Armies engaged thence to Verdun—Esternay retaken by the French—Description of the town and fight there—September 7—*Allies' general advance*—The fight to cross the Petit Morin River—Enemy in full retreat—September 8—Retreat continues—The British cavalry—The Petit Morin is crossed and freed—Heavy fighting with rearguards of retreating enemy—Onwards towards the Marne—The fighting on the Ourcq—British artillery's share—Fighting at Montmirail—General Foch pushes upwards past von Bülow's army—The Allies' nutcracker—The German nut—Fighting round Meaux—Description—Enemy in a vice—September 9—A critical stage—At La Ferte bridge—Enemy thrown across the Marne—The Ourcq again—General Maunoury—Esternay again—The French reach Château Thierry—Description of the operations—September 10—Sees close of battle—*Defeat of the enemy*—But he is not routed—von Kluck cut off from the east—Whole German line pressed back, including armies of von Hausen, Duke of Würtemberg, and Crown Prince—The French retake Châlons and Vitry-le-François—Decisive victory over Crown Prince—Description . . . . . pp. 20–40

CHAPTER XII

THE OCCUPATION OF THE AISNE

The effect of the Battle of the Marne—The character of the territory now being fought over—*Germans, to succeed, must attack*—They intend to envelop the Allies' left wing—Allies prepared—The " Rush to the Sea "—September 11, pursuit of enemy commenced—September 12—*Battle of the Aisne begins*—The Aisne Valley—The Allies attempt to cross the river—Description of " Eye-Witness "—Enemy evacuates Vitry-le-François—Gives way right along the line—The battle area a " kingdom of death "—September 13—Enemy continues his retreat—The Allies begin to cross the Aisne in great force—Amiens evacuated—Letter from his wife to dead German soldier—Difficulties of the British in crossing the river—The fight for the heights—Condition of the country now freed from the invader—Senlis—Crépy—Villers-Cotterets—Reims—The proclamation there—German savagery at Senlis—September 14—*Enemy settles down to a vigorous defensive*—British reinforcements passed across the river—Enemy again pressed back—September 15—Attack and counter-attack continuous along the whole line—September 16 and 17—Desperate fighting—The spirit of the troops—A French *Ordre du Jour*—Description of the operations by " Eye-Witness "—September 18 and 19—Little progress, but General Joffre develops a new plan of campaign—Sir John French makes his preparations accordingly—Enemy aeroplanes brought down—September 20 to 22—Only slight progress—Active bombardment by enemy—His object—Its failure—September 23 to 25—The eve of the great struggle—French and Germans each reorganise their lines—The Allies bring up heavier guns—September 26—*The great battle at its critical stage*—Summary of the results of the immediately preceding operations—The German army badly led and organised—Its soldiers losing confidence and heart—Diary of German officer—The night of the 27th and 28th—Enemy now puts forth his supreme effort—The end of September—The important advantage obtained by the Germans at St. Mihiel—The damage done to the towns—Reims—A premeditated outrage—General results of the struggle on the Aisne—Neither the plan of the Allies nor that of the Germans crowned with success, but the enemy had been checked and thrown back—So far it was a defeat for him . . . . . pp. 41–63

CHAPTER XIII

THE TRAGEDY OF REIMS

Lunéville—The burning of Cerceuil—Nancy—First enemy attack repulsed—Kaiser present—Second and final repulse—The German occupation of Lille—How they extorted money and goods from the city—The Prefect narrowly escapes execution—Amiens—Arrangements made for the entry of the enemy—German courtesy, but extravagant demands—Hostages—Peaceable occupation and quiet departure—Reims—A different tale—Its historic cathedral—The church of St. Remy—The strategic importance of Reims—The city evacuated by the French—Germans bombard and enter—September 4 to 12—At first no outrage during this period—The Germans begin to retreat through the city—Their unrestrained conduct—Fear of a rising of the people—Proclamation—Letter of a German soldier—French retake city—Germans retire to hills outside—French establish themselves opposite—The two armies bombard one another—Unfortunately city between—Bombardment continued for more than a fortnight from September 14—The searchlights on the cathedral—Agreement between German and French commanders not to bombard cathedral—Breach of agreement by Germans—September 19, cathedral shelled and in flames—Cathedral in use as a hospital—German wounded there—Many killed—Clergy attempt their rescue—Other damage done—Church of St. Remy—Civil hospital bombarded—Patients and attendants killed—The scenes in the city—September 28—Renewal of bombardment—Report of American architect—October 19—Germans dislodged from the hills . . . . . pp. 64–75

CHAPTER XIV

THE RUSH TO THE SEA

German attempt to reach the sea, and to envelop the Allies' left wing—Decision of Allies to extend their front to sea—Dunkirk garrison extends to Douai—Met by Allies' extension

from Amiens—Douai the centre of a great conflict—Effort of enemy to prevent joining up of Allies' front in this district—Battlefield extends from Amiens to Lille—Tactics of the enemy's infantry—Reinforcements of enemy in Lille district—Allies' serious decision on October 4—Their line a mere ribbon from Oise northwards—British troops again brought to position on extreme left—Fighting continues to October 9—Attacks on Hazebrouck—Belgian Government leaves Antwerp—Proclamation—Exchange of French and Belgian encouragement—October 9—Antwerp occupied by enemy—Belgian army escapes—Establishes itself on the Yser—Ghent, Bruges, and Ostend occupied by enemy—Exit from Ostend—Description in the *Daily Telegraph*—October 11 to 18—Battle from Ypres to the sea—Arras—Desperate fighting—Occupation by the enemy—The French retake the town—Roulers is reached by the Allies—October 18—October 19 and 20—Roulers is lost and regained by the Allies—Defensive position of Allies at Ypres reorganised—French reinforcements—The British are also reinforced—Ypres and its Cloth Hall—Fighting October 19 to 22—Results in complete barrier from the sea to the Swiss frontier pp. 76–97

CHAPTER XV

THE RALLY OF THE EMPIRE

The Germans expect the break-up of the Empire on outbreak of war—The armies of India—of Canada—of Australasia—of South Africa—The spontaneous enthusiasm of the Dominions and India for the Allies' cause—Their offers of aid—The King's thanks—The ambition of the coloured races—Canada offers an army—Her Premier's statement—The forces she agreed to raise—The linking of her regiments with the British—Organising her army—The secrecy of the preparations—The historic transport across the Atlantic—Reception at Plymouth—The Canadians in camp at Salisbury—Australia's army—Transport to Egypt—Dangers of the voyage—New Zealand's army—Her Expeditionary Force seizes Samoa—The Indian contingent—Arrival at Marseilles—Reception—The different castes and religions—In camp at Marseilles—At Orleans . . . . pp. 98–116

CHAPTER XVI

THE BATTLE OF FLANDERS

The word "battle" now acquires a new meaning—This battle actually comprised two—*The Battle of Calais*—Effort of the Germans to reach the coast—The Belgians inundate their country—Ramscapelle—The charge of the Bengal Lancers—The enemy evacuates the ground between the Yser and the railway—The Allies re-enter the Dixmude district—Fighting around Nieuport—The bombardment of Nieuport—The British monitors off the coast—The scene at Nieuport—The enemy fails to win the battle—*The Battle of Ypres*—The British forces transferred from the Aisne—The British front around Ypres—October 23—The enemy attempts to break through the position of the Allies—Desperate fighting to the south of the Lys—The character of the struggle—Heavy damage inflicted upon enemy—Letters from German soldiers—October 25—The British take up the offensive—Five days of fierce fighting—Persistent efforts round Ypres—October 30—Germans centred on Ypres—The charge of the London Scottish—Ypres spells sacrifice—The aircraft of the Allies—Enemy appreciation of their work—November 1—Renewed attack against Ypres—Continued on the 2nd—The enemy fails—Eight days of comparative quietude—The onslaught of the Pathans—November 11—The enemy renews his attack—He again centres on Ypres—His efforts against our trenches—Fighting at Dixmude—A five days' battle—Death of Lord Roberts—French fête the Belgian King—November 15—The battle ends—The enemy defeated . . . . . pp. 117–144

CHAPTER XVII

THE COWARD NATION

Germany begins the war by breaking nearly every rule of civilised warfare—Prohibited acts—Proclamation at Visé—General von Bülow's savagery—The world aghast at Germany's enormities—Manifesto of the German universities—German "Kultur" and the morality of war—Germany claims monopoly of ruthlessness—Her cowardly whines when blockaded by the British fleet—Outrages at Orsmael—At Sempst—Devastating the country—Arson—Special firing outfit of the German soldier—The excuses of the invaders—Their

methods at Senlis—Sack and pillage—Encouraged by and participated in by the officers—Women come from Germany to assist—The conflagration at Baccarat—The violation of women—Mutilation of children—Massacre of populations—Senlis again . pp. 145–155

CHAPTER XVIII

ON THE FRANCO-GERMAN FRONTIER

Importance of the operations on this frontier to the French—The Germans assassinate a French trooper before declaration of war—And repeatedly violate French territory—France avoiding all aggression—August 3—Germany declares war on France—Her reasons—German discourtesy to French Ambassador in Berlin—Alsace-Lorraine an important cause of the war—Eloquent article by M. Maurice Barres—German fear of the French on this frontier—The attack on Longwy—The opening operations of the war—Dash of the French into Alsace—Occupation of Altkirch—Occupation of Mulhouse—Fighting in the Vosges—Germans regain possession of Mulhouse—French hold the country in its vicinity—Fighting along the whole length of the frontier—Its complicated character—Struggle at Mangiennes—Declaration of war against Austria—Renewal of operations in the Vosges—Their importance to the French plans—The summit of Alsace—And the hills of Bonhomme and St. Marie—Occupation of Saales—Bombardment of Pont-à-Mousson—Constant fighting until the 22nd—Mulhouse reoccupied by the French on the 19th—French threaten the enemy's line of retreat—Germans thrown back across the Rhine—Success of French in Northern Alsace—And Lorraine—They are checked at Sarrebourg and Morhange—Germans now take up the offensive—In two days, though, it passed to the French—The German attack on Nancy—The French success—This fighting was the prelude and the crown of the victories of the Ourcq and the Marne—The Kaiser witnesses his defeat—His humiliating departure from Nancy—The French success at Amance—They again take up the offensive—And for the time being decisively press back the Germans in this region . . . . . pp. 156–175

CHAPTER XIX

ENTRENCHED FOR THE WINTER

The position of the two lines after the Battle of Ypres—A state of siege is initiated—Trenches take the place of fortresses—A siege or battle no longer within the frame of any one picture—The troops are all underground—A modern battlefield—From the sea to the Vosges there was one vast entrenched camp—Trench warfare in the Russo-Turkish and the Russo-Japanese wars—German preparations for trench warfare—French trenches—The German—The Allies learn something about trenches from the Germans—The equipment of the French army for trench construction—How work in the trenches was regulated—The British trenches—Where the artillery was placed—The entanglements—Digging trenches on the field of battle—Relieving a trench at night-time—Trench life during the daytime—The discomforts of trench life—The armies use hand grenades, mortars, and other weapons of bygone days—The struggle for Priest's Wood—Sapping—Overground attacks—Drain-pipes used as bomb-throwers—The periscope—Making the best of the dug-outs . . . . . pp. 176–193

CHAPTER XX

RUSSIA ENTERS THE FIELD

Kaiser declares war against Russia—Czar's manifesto to his people—Germany attempts to justify her action—The Austro-German forces—Their superiority over Russian—The Kaiser's plans—Thwarted by the Russian plans to invade Eastern Prussia and Galicia—Difference between the two plans—General von Hindenburg commands German army in Eastern Prussia—His study of the strategic possibilities of the Mazurian region—The Mazurian Lakes—Russia begins her advance—Eydtkuhnen—Stallupoenen—Austria invades Russian Poland—Middle of August—Czar's proclamation to the Poles—Russia continues advance to the Vistula—Germans make a stand at Szillen-Gumbinnen-Goldap—Heroism of Osnas—Germans pushed back to Gumbinnen—Great German retreat Pilkallen-Goldap—Tilsit occupied—Also Angerberg and Korschen—Königsberg invested—Three days' battle at Osterode-Allenstein-Tannenberg-Soldau—German victory at Tannenberg—Russians thrown into Mazurian swamps—Russian retreat .. pp. 194–208

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

COLOURED PLATES

	FACING PAGE
TYPES OF THE INDIAN ARMY	*Frontispiece*
THE SCRAP OF PAPER	58

COLOURED MAPS

CENTRAL EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN	20
THE EASTERN FRONTIER	194

BLACK-AND-WHITE PLATES

ON THE WAY TO THE TRENCHES	16
THE EFFECT OF BRITISH SHELL FIRE	28
AN ATTACK LED BY A BOMBING PARTY	34
AN INCIDENT IN THE BATTLES OF THE MEUSE	40
A STREET IN LILLE	66
THE GERMAN OCCUPATION OF LILLE	94
DEPARTURE OF THE VICTORIAN (B.C.) CONTINGENT	100
THE TAKING OF LANDRECIES	128
GERMAN GENERALS	146
CAPTURED GERMAN TRENCHES AT LES EPARGES	166
EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA	196
KIEL HARBOUR	200

MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

PAGE

THE POSITION OF THE ARMIES, AUGUST 22 . . . 2
THE FORTS OF PARIS 11
THE CLOSE OF THE GREAT RETREAT 21
THE RETREAT OF THE GERMANS, SEPTEMBER 9 . . 35
POSITION OF THE ARMIES ON SEPTEMBER 21 . . . 56
RUINED DOORWAY OF REIMS CATHEDRAL . . . 68
BATTLEFIELD BETWEEN ARRAS AND THE SEA . . . 78
THE BATTLEFIELD OF YPRES 91
SITUATION ON OCTOBER 22 95
THE RUINED CHURCH OF ST. JEAN, DIXMUDE . . 121
THE ALSACE-LORRAINE FRONTIER 157

THE HISTORY OF THE GREAT EUROPEAN WAR

ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS

BOOK III

THE CAMPAIGN OF THE ALLIES—Continued

CHAPTER X

IN THE DEPTHS

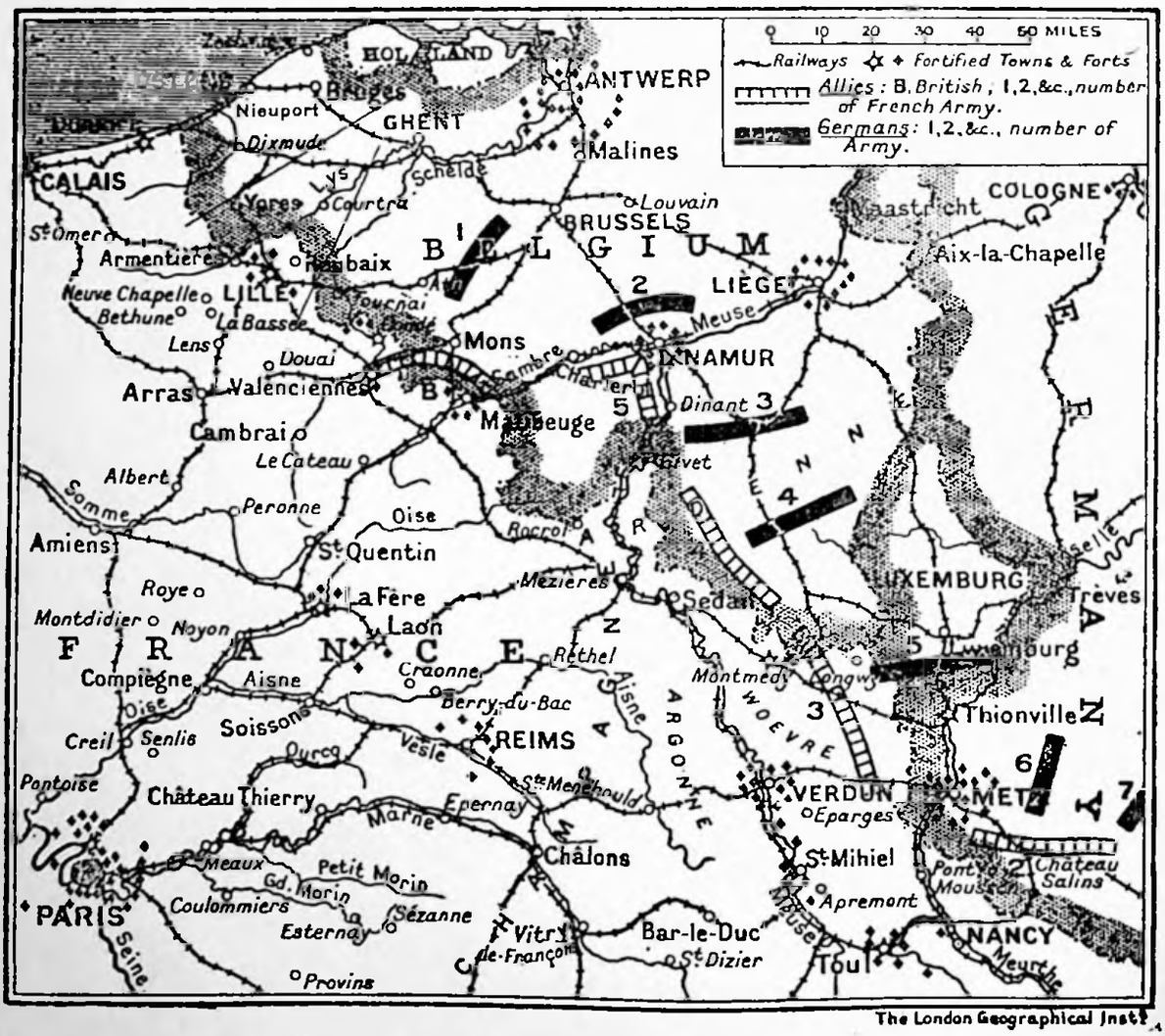
Paris and the Great Retreat—How London received the news—Would the Germans reach Paris?—Unanimous British decision to help to throw the enemy out of France and Belgium—Speech of Mr. Asquith—Speech of Lord Rosebery—Social conditions of the Empire are transformed by the war—In France—The fortifications of Paris—The defences of the city were complete—Paris under a Military Governor—Manifesto of the French Government—Its removal from the capital—Scenes at the departure—Preparations for a siege—The cattle in the parks—New city regulations—Effect on trade and life—The Germans contribute to the liveliness of the city—Refugees from the provinces—The exodus—The enemy's aeroplanes—Bombs dropped near the railway station—The Parisians not frightened—Remarkable literature also dropped—Women and children injured and killed by bombs—Enemy aeroplane raids become still more vindictive—Attempts against Notre Dame—The diabolical crime of a Sunday—Object of these raids—The French soldiers restive under the retreat—German intentions with regard to Paris.

WE have left the German army within striking distance of Paris.

Since the morning of August 24 its advance had been one of almost incredible rapidity, never once had the retreating army been given a single moment's rest. Aeroplanes, Zeppelins, armed motors, and cavalry had all been loosed in a pursuit which was immediate, relentless, and unresisting, not only harassing the retiring columns of the Allies, but also keeping the German staff fully informed as to their movements. The superiority, both numerical and material, of the German army against

that of the Allies was immense. Yet the resistance of the Allies was such that the retreat was in itself a victory, being so ordered as to prevent the Germans attaining the immediate end they had in view. In this retreat the British forces had played a great part, for without them the retreat would have been a rout and the Allies would have been hopelessly and perhaps finally beaten.

The fortnight subsequent to August 24 was a period of intense strain on the nerves of the English and the French peoples. The great question was what would happen to Paris and what would the Allies do if the Germans should drive them back still farther.



THE POSITION OF THE ARMIES, AUGUST 22.

Fortunately the position was not altogether one of hopelessness. In the first place the magnificent stand which the British army, in association with its French Allies, had made against the progress towards Paris of the German force was in itself a source

of inspiration. Again, this reverse, and the news which was always arriving of infamy upon infamy perpetrated by the Kaiser's troops on the hapless peoples whose lands they had invaded, had meant that immense numbers of fresh recruits had rolled up for the British army at home and abroad. Then, too, the British navy had just proved its worth in the brilliant dash to the Bight of Heligoland. Serbia also was a source of hopefulness. She had then advanced to Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, having cleared her own boundaries of every Austrian. But more important was the position in the East. Russia, notwithstanding that she was held in check by the necessity of dealing with the Austrians on her left, was yet continuing her advance towards Berlin. In Galicia, Austria had been badly beaten and it looked as though Lemberg and Cracow must soon fall.

The British people were all in a state of tense, suppressed apprehension and excitement, in the country and outlying districts of the Empire as well as in the great centres of population. In the cities, and in London in particular, the people moved about stolidly pursuing their usual avocations, to all appearances unperturbed altogether at the black news which every newspaper poster at all the street corners was candidly and boldly announcing. Nevertheless every edition of the papers would be bought by nearly every one, and at the shop windows where bulletins and dispatches were exhibited to the public great crowds were always massed, their British phlegm moved no more than to the extent of occasional comment, one to the other. In all homes, as well as in the restaurants, cafés, and other places of public resort, people were carefully reading their papers and anxiously referring to and following the thick black lines on the maps which indicated the German advance ; wherever two or three were gathered together an earnest discussion was taking place as to the possibilities of that ominous line.

There was a universal feeling, unexpressed generally perhaps, that Germany must not and would not actually reach Paris, and that something would be done by the powers that be to prevent it.

At this time there had been no rise in the prices of provisions, and amongst the male population there was less unemployment than had been known for years. There was, too, an unshakable belief that under no circumstances whatever would it be possible for the British Isles to be violated by an invader ; yet, though the critical ground was so far away as the neighbourhood of Paris, the soul of the British people was stirred as it never yet had been. Recruits came forward in numbers which almost overwhelmed the authorities. The Empire throughout its worldwide extent

was gathering itself together to fight for the cause now not of Belgium alone but of France and even Britain also. The feelings of the people were well expressed by their leaders, and great and enthusiastic meetings—at which men of such different opinions as Mr. Balfour, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Winston Churchill, and Mr. Will Crooks were to be found on the same platform—were held throughout the Empire. In Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere the great statesmen and leaders of men, without regard to party considerations, were voicing the intention of Britain to see this reverse put right and the war through to a successful issue. In the United Kingdom remarkable speeches were made by Mr. Asquith, Lord Rosebery, Mr. Bonar Law—the Leader of the Opposition—Mr. Winston Churchill, Mr. Lloyd George, and others. These speeches not only showed our own people and the Allies that Britain meant business, but also let the enemy know that his success so far must not be regarded as an indication of what the future had in store for him.

The following is from the speech of Mr. Asquith, delivered by him in the Guildhall. Never before had he spoken a fiercer defence of justice, a graver denunciation of criminal oppression. Never had he appeared so clearly the strong man, strong in crisis, unflinching, rigid in the forefront of an honourable and irresistible cause, facing, with a clean conscience, the bloody arbitrament between Right and Might.

The terrible spectacle which now confronts us of a contest which for the number and importance of the Powers engaged, the scale of their armaments and armies, the width of the theatre of conflict, the outpouring of blood and the loss of life, the incalculable toll of suffering levied upon non-combatants, the material and moral loss accumulating day by day to the higher interests of civilised mankind—is a contest which in every one of these aspects is without precedent in the annals of the world.

We are confident to-day, when reluctantly, and against our will, but with a clear judgment and a clean conscience, we find ourselves involved with the whole strength of this Empire in a bloody arbitrament between Might and Right. The issue has passed out of the domain of argument into another field, but let me ask you, and through you the world outside, what would have been our condition as a nation to-day if we had been base enough, through timidity or through perverted calculation of self-interest, or through a paralysis of the sense of honour and duty—if we had been base enough to be false to our word and faithless to our friends.

Our eyes would have been turned at this moment, with those of the whole civilised world, to Belgium, a small State, which has lived for more than seventy years under the several and collective guarantee to which we in common with Prussia and Austria were parties, and we should have

seen, at the instance and by the action of two of these guaranteeing Powers, her neutrality violated, her independence strangled, her territery made use of as affording the easiest and the most convenient road to a war of unprovoked aggression against France.

We, the British people, would at this moment have been standing by with folded arms and with such countenance as we could command while this small and unprotected State, in defence of her vital liberty, made a heroic stand against overweening and overwhelming force ; we should have been admiring as detached spectators the siege of Liége, the steady and manful resistance of a small army to the occupation of their capital, with its splendid traditions and memories, the gradual forcing back of the patriotic defenders of their native land to the ramparts of Antwerp, countless outrages inflicted by buccaneering levies exacted from the unoffending civil population, and, finally, the greatest crime committed against civilisation and culture since the Thirty Years' War, the sack of Louvain—with its buildings, its pictures, its unique library, its unrivalled associations—a shameless holocaust of irreparable treasures lit up by blind barbarian vengeance.

What account should we, the Government and the people of this country, have been able to render to the tribunal of our national conscience and sense of honour, if, in defiance of our plighted and solemn obligations, we had endured, nay, if we had not done our best to prevent, yes, and to avenge these intolerable outrages ? *For my part, I say that sooner than be a silent witness—which means in effect a willing accomplice—of this tragic triumph of force over law and of brutality over freedom, I would see this country of ours blotted out of the pages of history.*

That is only a phase—a lurid and illuminating phase—in the contest in which we have been called by the mandate of duty and of honour to bear our part. The cynical violation of the neutrality of Belgium was, after all, but a step—the first step—in a deliberate policy of which, if not the immediate, the ultimate, and the not far distant aim, was to crush the independence and autonomy of the Free States of Europe.

First Belgium, then Holland, then Switzerland—countries, like our own, imbued and sustained with the spirit of liberty—were one after another to be bent to the yoke, and these ambitions were fed and fostered by a body of new doctrines and new philosophies preached by professors and learned men. The free and full self-development which to these small States, to ourselves, to our great and growing Dominions over the seas, to our kinsmen across the Atlantic, is the well-spring and life-breath of national existence—that free self-development is the one capital offence in the code of those who have made force their supreme divinity, and who upon its altars are prepared to sacrifice both the gathered fruits and the potential germs of the unfettered human spirit.

I use this language advisedly. *This is not mercly a material, it is also a spiritual conflict.* Upon its issues everything that contains promise and hope, that leads to emancipation and a fuller liberty for the millions who make up the mass of mankind, will be found sooner or later to depend.

Let me now just for a moment turn to the actual situation in Europe.

How do we stand? For the last ten years, by what I believe to be happy and well-considered diplomatic arrangements, we have established friendly and increasingly intimate relations with the two Powers, France and Russia, with whom, in days gone by, we have had in various parts of the world occasions for constant friction, and now and again for possible conflict. Those new and better relations, based in the first instance upon business principles of give-and-take, matured into a settled temper of confidence and good-will. They were never in any sense or at any time, as I have frequently said in this hall, directed against other Powers. No man in the history of the world has ever laboured more strenuously or more successfully than my right honourable friend, Sir Edward Grey, for that which is the supreme interest of the modern world, a general and abiding peace.

It is, I venture to think, a very superficial criticism which suggests that under his guidance the policy of this country has ignored, still less that it has counteracted and hampered the Concert of Europe. It is little more than a year ago that under his presidency, in the stress and strain of the Balkan crisis, the Ambassadors of all the Great Powers met here day after day, curtailing the area of possible differences, reconciling warring ambitions and aims, and preserving against almost incalculable odds the general harmony. And it was in the same spirit and with the same purpose, when a few weeks ago Austria delivered her ultimatum to Serbia, that our Foreign Secretary put forward the proposal for a mediating Conference between the four Powers who were not directly concerned—Germany, France, Italy, and ourselves. If that proposal had been accepted, actual controversy would have been settled with honour to everybody, and the whole of this terrible welter would have been avoided.

And with whom does the responsibility rest—for this refusal and for all the illimitable suffering which now confronts the world? One Power and one Power only, and that Power—Germany. That is the fount and origin of this worldwide catastrophe. We are persevering to the end. No one, who has not been confronted as we were with the responsibility of determining the issues of peace and war, can realise the strength and energy and persistency with which we laboured for peace. We persevered by every expedient that diplomacy could suggest, straining almost to the breaking-point our most cherished friendships and obligations, even to the last making effort upon effort, and hoping against hope.

Then, and only then, when we were at last compelled to realise that the choice lay between honour and dishonour, between treachery and good faith, when at last we reached the dividing line which makes or mars a nation worthy of the name, it was then, and then only, that we declared for war.

Is there any one in this hall or in this United Kingdom, or in the vast Empire of which we here stand in the capital and centre, who blames or repents our decision? For these reasons, as I believe, we must steel ourselves to the task, and in the spirit which animated our forefathers in their struggle against the domination of Napoleon, we must and we shall persevere to the end.

It would be a criminal mistake to underestimate either the magnitude,

the fighting quality, or the staying power of the forces which are arrayed against us. But it would be equally foolish and equally indefensible to belittle our own resources, whether for resistance or attack. Belgium has shown us by a memorable and a glorious example what can be done by a relatively small State when its citizens are animated and fired by the spirit of patriotism. In France and Russia we have as Allies two of the greatest Powers of the world engaged with us in a common cause, who do not mean to separate themselves from us any more than we mean to separate ourselves from them.

We have upon the seas the strongest and most magnificent fleet that has ever been seen. The Expeditionary Force which left our shores less than a month ago has never been surpassed, as its glorious achievements in the field have already made clear, not only in material and equipment, but in the physical and the moral quality of its constituents.

I do not flatter the navy when I say that its superiority is equally marked in every department and sphere of its activity. We rely on it with the most absolute confidence, not only to guard our shores against the possibility of invasion, not only to seal up the gigantic battleships of the enemy in the inglorious seclusion of his own ports—whence from time to time he furtively steals forth to sow the seeds of murderous snares, which are more full of menace to neutral ships than to the British fleet. Our navy does all this; and while it is thirsting, I do not doubt, for that trial of strength in a fair and open fight which is so far prudently denied it, it does a great deal more.

It has hunted the German mercantile marine from the high seas. It has kept open our own sources of food supply and has largely curtailed those of the enemy, and when the few German cruisers which still infest the more distant ocean routes have been disposed of—as they will be disposed of very soon—it will achieve for British and neutral commerce passing backwards and forwards, from and to every part of our Empire, a security as complete as it has ever enjoyed in the days of unbroken peace. Let us honour the memory of the gallant seamen who, in the pursuit of one or another of these varied and responsible duties, have already laid down their lives for their country. . . . Of the actual progress of the war, I will not say anything except that in my judgment, in whatever direction we look, there is abundant ground for pride and for confidence. I say nothing more, because I think we should all bear in mind that we are at present watching the fluctuations of fortune only in the early stages of what is going to be a protracted struggle. We must learn to take long views, and to cultivate, above all, other faculties —those of patience, endurance, and steadfastness.

Meanwhile, let us go, each of us, to his or her appropriate place in the great common task. Never had a people more or richer sources of encouragement and inspiration. Let us realise, first of all, that we are fighting as a united Empire, in a cause worthy of the highest traditions of our race. Let us keep in mind the patient and indomitable seamen, who never relax for a moment, night or day, their stern vigil of the lonely sea. Let us keep in mind our gallant troops, who to-day, after a fortnight's continuous fighting under conditions which would try the mettle of the

best army that ever took the field, maintain not only an undefeated but an unbroken front.

Finally, let us recall the memories of the great men and the great deeds of the past, commemorated some of them in the monuments which we see around us on these walls, not forgetting the dying message of the younger Pitt, his last public utterance, made at the table of one of your predecessors, my Lord Mayor, in this very hall: "England has saved herself by her exertions, and will, as I trust, save Europe by her example." The England of those days gave a noble answer to his appeal, and did not sheathe the sword until, after nearly twenty years of fighting, the freedom of Europe was secured. Let us go and do likewise.

The following is from the speech delivered by Lord Rosebery at Broxburn in Linlithgow:

We have met at a very solemn moment in the history of this country—more solemn, I think, than any that has occurred in the history of the world—and yet a month ago, say on August 1, we were all at peace, with scarcely a thought of war. Within a month our armies have been hewing their way through desperate odds. We have had two lists of casualties and may soon have a third or fourth. Our fleet has been in action. The whole face of Europe is convulsed, as by an earthquake, with the march of millions of armed men. What a change, and in how short a time! And how did this change come about?

We shall not know for some years to come the secret history of what brought about this war. We know the simple outside facts—the simple surface facts that Austria declared war against Serbia, that Russia declared she must stand by Serbia, that Germany said she must stand by Austria, and that France said she must stand by Russia. It was really a spark in the midst of the great powder magazine which the nations of Europe have been building up for the last twenty years or thirty years—the spark alighting in that tremendous powder magazine which, with infinite toil—misapplied toil, as I think—the nations of Europe have been constructing.

When you go on building up armaments against one another, there comes a time when either the guns go off of themselves, or else the people say: "We can no longer bear this burden of suspense. We had better make an end of it and come to blows at once."

How do we come in? All through the correspondence that led up to the declaration of war you will see that our Government, and, of course, its mouthpiece and skilful agent, Sir Edward Grey, was skilful and energetic and untiring in trying to suggest methods by which peace might be preserved. I do not think that he had a fair chance, because the time was too short, and all the time the armies were being mobilised, and when armies are being mobilised, war becomes almost inevitable. But, at any rate, that was our part in the general contentions of Europe—peace.

Our second was this—honour. We were parties to a treaty, to which France and the kingdom of Prussia were also parties, guaranteeing the independence and the integrity of Belgium. We determined, rightly or wrongly,

wisely or unwisely—but I think rightly and wisely—that so long as any power remained in the arm of Great Britain she was bound not to go back upon her pledged word to Belgium, and she was determined that, if Germany were determined to violate her word, Great Britain would not violate hers.

Belgium is at this moment a welter of fire and blood and destruction, the work of one of the Powers that had sworn to guarantee her independence. How long would the British people have endured such a spectacle at their doors as that? We should have gone in then, and gone in too late, and should only have had the remorse of our first hesitation.

This is the greatest war that the world has ever seen. The Battle of Leipzig, in which Russia, Austria, and Prussia fought against the Emperor Napoleon and crushed him, was called the Battle of the Nations, but it was not the battle of nations; it was the battle of great armies. It was reserved for this war to be the Battle of the Nations. Every man on the Continent of Europe who can bear arms is under arms at this moment, excepting in a few countries. Among all the Great Powers of Europe, except Italy, every man at this moment is under arms. But we are not in that position. We have never gone in for conscription; we have never demanded that every man should bear arms for his country. But remember this: that by the common law of Great Britain every man, valid and capable of bearing arms, is bound at the call of his country to do so.

There is one thing that is perfectly clear in all this matter—those who go to fight will go to fight in a righteous cause. We are fighting for the independence of Belgium against a Power which guaranteed it and has destroyed it; we are fighting for the freedom of France, a friendly Power who is allied with ourselves, but we are also fighting for the sanctity of the public law of Europe, which, if our enemies be the conquerors, is torn up and destroyed for ever.

When the German Foreign Secretary was asked if he was really going to infringe the neutrality of Belgium he said, "You are not going to war for that—going to war for a scrap of paper." A great Power that treats "scraps of paper" like that is not unlikely to be scrapped herself. The German Chancellor in Parliament said, "We knew we were doing wrong in invading the neutrality of Belgium, but we were compelled to do wrong." A nation that begins a great war by declaring that its foundation is wrong, and that it is obliged to do wrong, is likely to fare badly if there be a God in heaven.

Then we are not merely fighting for Belgium, France, and the sanctity of public law, but we are also fighting for ourselves. We do not fight to gain an acre of territory, we do not fight to gain any advantage for ourselves, we only fight to secure our own liberties against an oppression which would be intolerable.

I know that we have seen wars in our time in which the loss of a province or two ended the war. That will not be so in this. We have seen wars in which an indemnity of money put an end to the war; that will not be so now.

Make no mistake, this is a fight to a finish. If we go under now, we go under for ever. I do not ask you to suggest to yourselves that you will go

under for a moment—but if you are not going under, every man who is capable of defending his country is bound to step into the breach.

Just think. Try and imagine what it would be if we were beaten. I do not suppose we should be annexed as a province. That is unthinkable—to see foreign uniforms, foreign police, foreign laws, foreign taxgatherers in our country. That I discard as absolutely impossible. But there is another very improbable contingency which might happen—which would happen if we were defeated—which is that we would be reduced at once to an inferior Power, living at the goodwill of our superior lord, living on sufferance, our army limited, our navy limited, our Empire cut up and divided among the plunderers, a position so abject that we can't realise it now.

If we were to sink to be a third-rate Power, in the position that I have described, I for one would from my heart and soul rather that all our people as they now exist were to pass into exile and into death, and leave this island vacant for some superior race.

We are going to win, because a nation and an Empire like ours cannot be extinguished by any such warfare as this.

We are going to win because we have our people united as they never have been before.

We are going to win because our dominions and empires outside these islands vie with each other in generous emulation as to which shall give us most support in supplies and money and men.

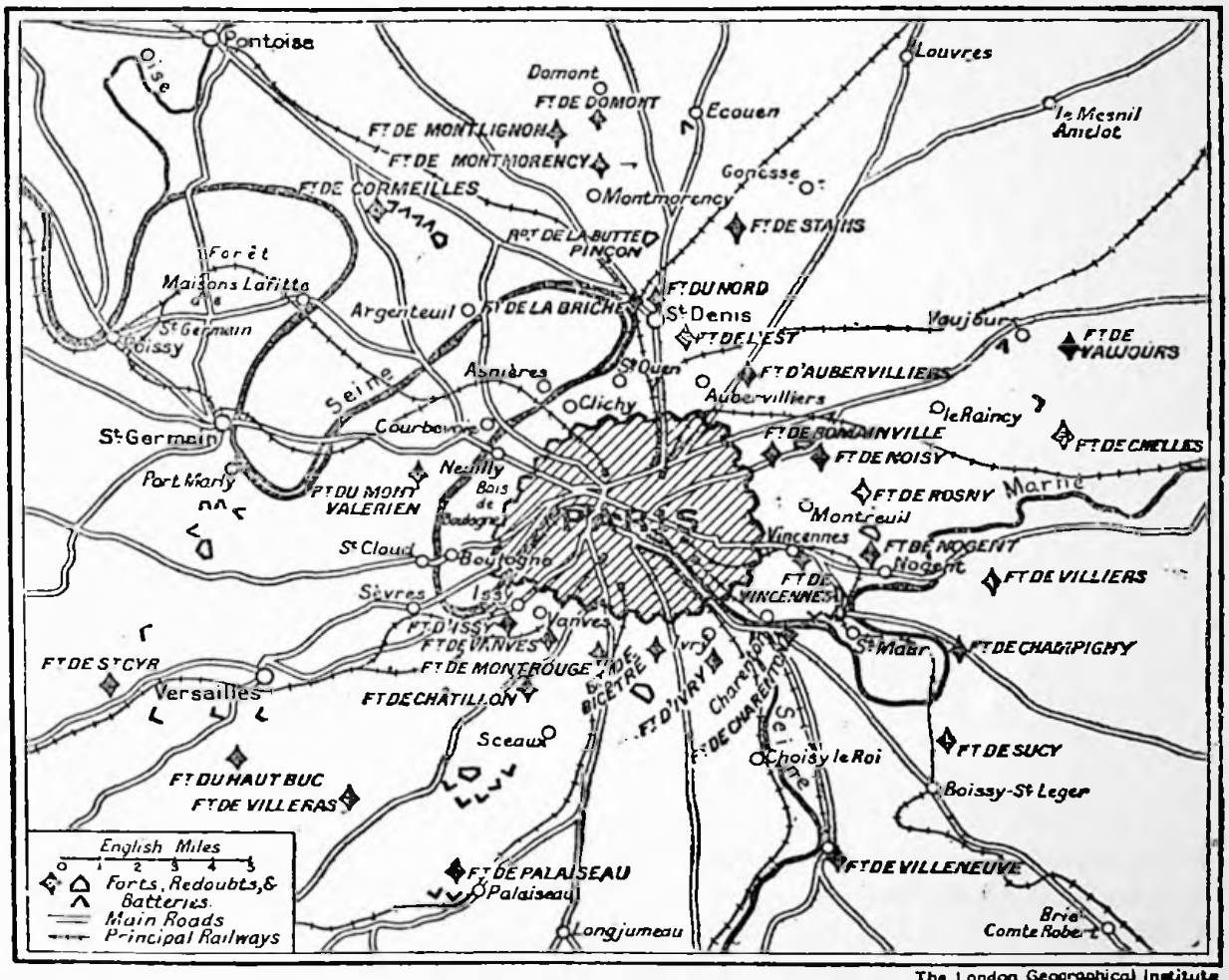
Above all, we are going to win because we have a high, a pure, and a just cause, and we can appeal with humble, but, I think, earnest confidence to Him who, in the words of our beautiful old paraphrase, we recognise as the

> God of Bethel, by Whose hand
> Our people still are led.

In France interest centred for the moment on the question of the fortifications of Paris. No Frenchman could forget the feeble state in which these defences were found in 1870, and none could but feel confident that now for this occasion the fortifications at Paris were probably more than adequate. It was very largely believed, indeed, that it would be impossible for the Germans to invest Paris because of their vast size and extent. The Kaiser had instructed his troops to take Paris or die, and the French, though the army was now almost at the gates of Paris, were quite satisfied in their own minds that these troops would have to die if they were to attempt to obey the injunction of the Kaiser.

Paris was now, in the words of the *Times* military correspondent, almost a fortified province. It embraced in the defended area Enghien, Argenteuil, Versailles, and the forests of Saint Germain and Bondy. The perimeter was over eighty miles. Starting from the north there were in succession forts Cormeilles, Montlignon, Domont, Montmorency, Ecouen, and Stains, forming the northern group. To the east there were forts Vaujours and

Chelles. Between the Marne and the Seine came forts Villiers, Champigny, Sucy, and Villeneuve Saint Georges. To the south was fort Palaiseau, while the hills from Palaiseau to Chatillon were crowned by the various batteries which are shown on the plan on



The London Geographical Institute

THE FORTS OF PARIS.

this page. On the west stood forts Villeras, Haut-Buc, St. Cyr, and Marly, with the numerous batteries which are also shown.

To invest Paris the line necessary to be held by the enemy would be not less than 100 miles in length ; and if this line were held in the same relative strength as in 1870 no fewer than 500,000 men would be required to occupy it.

By the end of August the work of putting the entrenched camp of Paris in a state of defence had been completed. All the occupiers or landlords of buildings of any kind within the range of the fortifications and defensive works of the city, both ancient and modern, had been ordered by the Military Governor to leave them within four days and to demolish them completely. So, for nearly a week, the surroundings of Paris resounded to

explosions incidental to the destruction of houses, shops, factories, warehouses, and barns, the result being that each fort looked out over what seemed to be a desert of ruins, across which it could, without hindrance, direct the fire of its heavy guns on an advancing army. This meant, too, that large numbers of people were dishoused and had to find homes within the boundaries of the city. Paris was assuming, in fact, a character almost exclusively military, on the assumption that very shortly it would be the axis around which the armies would revolve. To the great satisfaction of the Parisians all Germans, Austrians, and Hungarians were required to report themselves without fail from September 4, at St. Lazare station, to be deported by the train leaving at 6 o'clock in the evening. Outside the gates at frequent intervals barricades were erected, or obstacles of trees felled and laid with their branches towards the possibly approaching enemy, or the stone paving of the roads was torn up—much of it dating from the time of Louis XIV—and made into parapets on either side. At such obstacles were stationed military posts by whom a traveller's papers and identity were closely questioned.

Paris was completely in the hands of the military authorities. The Government had moved to Bordeaux, the city being left under the control of a Military Governor. When moving to Bordeaux a manifesto was issued by the Government in the following terms:

PARIS, *Wednesday.*

People of France—For several weeks relentless battles have engaged our heroic troops and the army of the enemy. The valour of our soldiers has won for them, at several points, marked advantages; but in the north the pressure of the German forces has compelled us to fall back.

This situation has compelled the President of the Republic and the Government to take a painful decision.

In order to watch over the national welfare it is the duty of the public powers to remove themselves temporarily from the city of Paris.

Under the command of its eminent Chief, the French army, full of courage and zeal, will defend the capital and its patriotic population against the invader.

But the war must be carried on at the same time on the rest of its territory.

Without peace or truce, without cessation or faltering, the struggle for the honour of the nation and the reparation of violated right must continue. None of our armies is impaired. If some of them have sustained too considerable losses, the gaps have immediately been filled up from the reserves, and the appeal for recruits assures us of new reserves in men and energy to-morrow.

Endure and fight! Such must be the motive of the Allied British, Russian, Belgian, and French armies.

Endure and fight ! while at sea the British aid us, cutting the communication of our enemy with the world.

Endure and fight ! while the Russians continue to advance to strike the decisive blow at the heart of the German Empire.

It is the duty of the Government of the Republic to direct this stubborn resistance. Everywhere Frenchmen will rise for their independence ; but to ensure the utmost spirit and efficacy to the formidable fight, it is indispensable that the Government shall remain free to act.

At the request of the Military Authorities the Government is therefore temporarily shifting its headquarters to a place where it can remain in constant touch with the whole of the country.

It calls upon members of Parliament not to remain away from it, in order that they may form, with their colleagues, the symbol of national unity.

The Government only leaves Paris after having assured the defence of the city and of the entrenched camp by every means in its power.

It knows that it does not need to recommend to the admirable population of Paris that calm resolution and coolness which it is showing every day, and which is equal to its highest duties.

People of France ! let us be worthy of these tragic circumstances. We shall gain the final victory ; we shall gain it by unflagging will, endurance, and tenacity.

A nation which does not wish to perish, and which, in order to live, does not flinch either from suffering or sacrifice, is sure of victory.

The Manifesto was signed by President Poincaré and all the Ministers.

This removal was decided upon by the Military Authorities in order that the Government might retain its freedom of action and remain in constant touch with the whole country. There was, in fact, no danger that Paris would be cut off from the rest of France ; it was preferable, however, that the Civil Government should remove, because the operations of the troops would render it impossible for it to remain and conduct its usual functions ; and in the provinces it would remain more freely in contact with the Allies and with the neutral Powers, and so be better able to organise defence and supplies. The removal of the French Government was described as follows in the *Daily Chronicle* :

One thousand two hundred of the 1,500 employees of the Ministry of War, of all grades, had received notice, first to send their families into the country immediately, then to go themselves to Tours, taking with them what they could of the material for which they were responsible.

The loading of automobiles with office documents, typewriters, and other effects was then proceeding at full pressure.

At other Ministries there was the same scene of hurried packing in corridors full of boxes, and a rapid succession of motor-cars carrying away the official property as soon as it was ready.

In the evening their various excellencies left the Quai D'Orsay Station; and none who saw it is ever likely to forget the scene.

The windows of each carriage of the special train were labelled with the names of the countries whose representatives it was carrying off.

There was the Persian Minister and M. Romdos, the black-bearded Greek, and a Russian Military Attaché in uniform, and *les braves Belges*, and all sorts of servants, including a Chinese nurse feeding a yellow baby, with coal-black eyes.

And, at last, a soft horn was blown and the train rolled away. Say what you like about the adventurous Herr Taube and the possible approaching legions of his still more reckless Kaiser, it is no pleasant thing to see the world's delegates pack up their traps and leave the splendid city of Paris to its fate.

President Poincaré, accompanied by all the members of the Ministry, left for Bordeaux at 5 a.m., and they were followed in two special trains by the Presidents and members of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies with other official persons.

The main body of the staff and the reserves of the Banque de France had already been removed. The higher legal functions of the Republic will be represented in the provisional capital by fifteen judges taken from the three divisions of the Court of Cassation.

There was something very grievous about this retreat—something, for a civilian, like what the soldier feels when he witnesses a forced retirement on the battlefield.

As an essential part of the preparation of Paris for a siege, the authorities made very special arrangements for the provisioning of the city. So perfect and far-seeing were these arrangements that, had the city been subject to a siege lasting for months, its food supply would have been quite adequate. Fresh meat was assured for a period of about six months by the expedient of turning the Bois de Boulogne and the Bois de Vincennes into vast stockyards. Here, in the Bois de Boulogne, the promenade of fashionable Parisians gave place to a grazing ground for tens of thousands of cattle and sheep. Bringing these animals into Paris was no slight undertaking, and so successfully was it accomplished by means of hundreds of cattle trains that the arrangements constituted a triumph of organisation. For some days these trains converging on to Paris from the provinces maintained pride of place on the railway lines, all other traffic being required to give way to them. So, too, was it with grain and other food supplies, which were also brought into the city by innumerable trains.

In very many other respects also Paris speedily began to assume an appearance very different to that usual to it. The people found themselves subject to unaccustomed restrictions in

every direction. No motor-car belonging to a civilian, for instance, could leave Paris without the permission of the Military Authorities. In the evening and night, when usually the central boulevards were at their brightest and their best, now solitude and silence reigned almost supreme. The cafés and restaurants closed at 9 o'clock, theatres and music-halls did not open at all, and very few public conveyances were in the streets. Most of the hotels were closed and quite half of the shops, many of these latter having a notice posted on the shutters that the proprietor had gone to the front and business would be resumed on his return! And because of the great number of men who had gone to the front—for even all the reserves and territorials had been called out—many businesses were closed for lack of men to carry them on. The output of the baker, for instance, was restricted to the most necessary forms of bread by reason of his lack of staff. It would be difficult for a man to get a shave or a lady to buy a bunch of flowers, for the barbers and the florists would all be in the army fighting for their country. Newspapers and magazines, too, ceased to appear, for literary men, as also artists of every description, were for the most part in arms. Where possible, premises which were no longer capable of being used as in times of peace were devoted to some object connected with the war. So one found hospitals, dispensaries, public kitchens, and sewing and working centres where in happier times were hotels, factories, shops, and workrooms. One hotel, the Hôtel Majestic, near the Arc de Triomphe, which was one of the most palatial in Paris, had been turned into a splendidly equipped British hospital.

It must not be imagined, however, that Paris had thus become an absolutely deserted and lifeless city. Certainly men of military age were conspicuous by their absence and more than the usual proportion of women were dressed in mourning, yet the city throbbed as ever with life. Amusement and recreation still existed, though often of a new kind. One now, for instance, instead of riding in the Bois, paid a visit there to watch the cattle and sheep, and where in old times ladies would be content to meet for tea and gossip, now they would gather together in workrooms, busily sewing comforts for the soldiers. In the earlier days of September, too, there would be scenes of interest, though generally pathetic, in the throngs of people surging into the city as refugees from the countryside, or leaving the city for some place of safety in the distant provinces.

The Germans, too, were careful that Paris should not lack excitement, sending their aeroplanes to visit the city and drop bombs, spreading destruction and death.

Two whole departments of France had now been invaded by the enemy; from two whole departments now flocked thousands of people into Paris, seeking to escape the ravages of the invading hordes. All roads converging on to Paris from the direction of these departments were filled with these unfortunates. During the hot days of the end of August and the beginning of September they toiled along the roads exchanging tales of atrocities and fears of what the future might bring. Already in the course of this history descriptions have been given of the hurrying along the roads of refugees. One flight is very much the same as another; the same crowd of people, the same classes of people, the same heterogeneous collections of vehicles, the same kinds of parcels of belongings, and the same weary eagerness.

The exodus out of Paris was as striking a scene as the incursion of the refugees. The railway stations of the city serving the southern line were besieged by thousands of people who, for many hours, had waited with numbered tickets their turn to enter the trains. Almost entirely those who were leaving Paris were either refugees from the provinces or women and children whom the citizens were sending away from the threatening danger. The Parisians themselves, the men certainly, did not leave and had no inclination to leave. As in the siege of forty-five years before, the Parisian settled in Paris as though bound to the city by some invisible and intangible attraction which he could not resist and did not even wish to.

There was undoubted danger in remaining in Paris, the German aeroplanes alone counting for something in this respect. From the end of August the Germans commenced to attack the city and its people with these machines. On September 1, an enemy Taube aeroplane flew over the city in the evening, dropping two bombs, one of which fell near the Gare St. Lazare, and the other in a street near the Opera House. The machine was fired upon by two British soldiers, but, rising quickly to a great height, was able to fly away uninjured.

After a few days, by September 6, these visits of enemy aeroplanes became, for a week or so, quite a matter of course, and although on several occasions not only did they do damage to buildings, but even killed some unfortunate children and old men, the people of Paris were determined not to be frightened. As a matter of fact Parisians gradually acquired the habit of regarding the visits of German aircraft as a form of entertainment, and particularly amusing was the literature which the tactless, foolish Germans thought it good policy to drop upon Paris from their machines. It is inconceivable to imagine that any sane people

ON THE WAY TO THE TRENCHES.

A train of transports on the way to the troops in the firing line.

could have expected to seduce the patriotism of the Parisian by dropping upon him, accompanied perhaps by a bomb, a printed appeal such as the following :

> German army at the gates of Paris. All you have to do is to surrender.
> (Signed) LIEUT. VON HEIDESSEN.

A paper with these words on it, bound up with the German flag, was picked up in a street where a bomb had fallen just about the time and place that another bomb had mangled and killed a woman and two little children!

As time went on, long after the German army had been driven from the near vicinity of Paris, enemy aeroplane raids recommenced with greater vindictiveness. One afternoon in October two aeroplanes flew over the city, dropping twenty bombs, one of the latter falling on the roof of Notre Dame and there exploding. On this occasion the accompanying literature was a statement that the Germans had taken Antwerp and that it would be the turn of Paris next. A few days before this seven bombs were dropped in one day by a German aviator. On this occasion an attempt was made to destroy as many as possible of the cattle and sheep which were pasturing in the city ready for emergency. A great number of cattle were then on the racecourse of Auteuil, but, though the two bombs were dropped right in the midst of the herd, yet only one ox was killed and a big hole made in the ground. Elsewhere, in the neighbourhood of the Avenue Trocadero, a bomb which was thrown down, apparently with the intention of destroying a tram, struck a neighbouring lamp-post, which it bent and shattered, killed a man who was passing, and blew off the feet of a little girl. This poor child was struck down on to the pavement, where she lay with her blood trickling into the gutter, the red pieces of her shattered bones being open to the gaze of every one who passed. The man who was killed had his stomach frightfully torn and his throat cut. And this attack on defenceless non-combatants, which could not possibly have had any military effect whatever, took place on a Sunday of all days, in the neighbourhood of a church. The French soldiers were quick to fire on the aeroplane, but though they did their best and the machine guns of the Eiffel Tower joined in the assault, yet the aeroplane was fortunate enough to escape. As the aviator cleared the danger zone, he dropped a bag of sand with a streamer attached exhibiting the usual announcement intended to frighten the people and to make them believe that all France was already in the hands, of the Germans, who would soon be in Paris. These streamers and missives became in time cherished objects for the

collector, exhibiting as they did the absurd and arrogant ignorance and tactics of the German.

Had it not been for the occasional death or injury suffered by some innocent and helpless non-combatant victim, the Parisians would have regarded these visits of the German aviators with the most absolute equanimity. As acts of warfare they were contemptible and absolutely without use or rational object. No doubt the real object of the Germans was to strike terror in the hearts of the Parisians; but in this they failed altogether, for Paris regarded the visits of the aeroplanes as something altogether ridiculous and futile.

By September 5, Paris was more deeply concerned with the war as it was then being waged on terra firma in their own country. With the German army almost within range of the guns of the fortifications of the city, with even stray Uhlans within the fortifications themselves—duly, of course, to be made prisoners and brought into the city—and with the great incursion of the Allied soldiers—particularly the British—passing through Paris in retreat, many remaining in the city while others moved downward to the south-east, where they were taking up their position, there was every reason for Paris and the whole of France herself to be filled with an intense apprehension and foreboding as to the future.

To the French soldiers this retreat was more than galling. The fairest provinces of their country were in the occupation of the enemy, and they themselves were apparently allowed to do nothing but fall back and back and almost passively allow him to advance.

It was known, according to the *Matin*, that the Germans had carried foresight to the length of making preparations not only for the occupation of Paris, after what they presumed would be its easy conquest, but also for using their possession of the capital as a means of blackmail for imposing a shameful peace on France. According to the German plan the great city was to be divided into seven sectors, each of which was to receive a garrison of 100,000 Germans. Then the Kaiser, at the head of a million and a half of men, was to appear before the fallen city, and propose to what was left of the French Government a truce and pardon in return for provinces and gold and perhaps, also, soldiers and sailors to help him in his invasion of England. Supposing the French Government refused, what then? A first military execution would be carried out. One of the sectors of Paris would be systematically sacked, public monuments would be pillaged and destroyed, private banks robbed and then burned, and private houses turned upside down by the German troops. When this

" example " had been made, a fresh ultimatum would be presented. In the event of a second refusal, another sector would be handed over to the military, and so on from example to example and from looting to looting. They flattered themselves that they would soon have done with France. It would then be time to turn to that slowcoach Russia, and bring her to her knees with all the forces set free by this first victory. Germany thought that Russia would be in need of ammunition and unable to hold out for three months. She similarly counted on the feelings of selfishness with which she supposed Great Britain was animated, and her lack of preparation.

CHAPTER XI

THE BATTLE OF THE MARNE

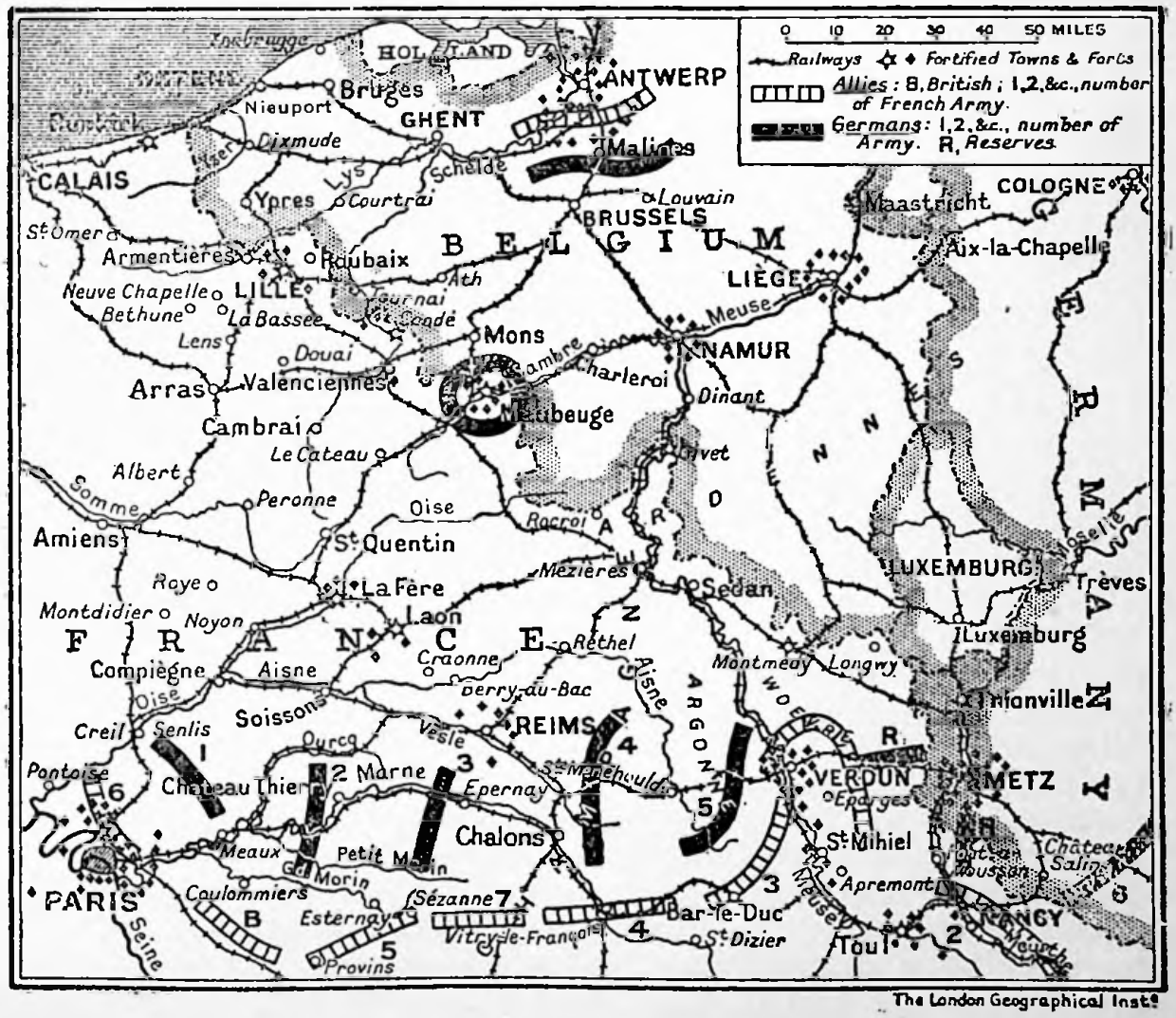
British chafing at retreat—Their officers' assurance—General von Kluck turns eastward—Critical position—He might be enveloped—*The British and French make a stand*—The time has arrived—They take the offensive—And dispose themselves to attack the rear and flanks of von Kluck's army—Memorable Orders of the Day—September 6—The great battle commences—Positions of the opposing armies—British movements on first day of battle—Disposition of opposing armies at close of day—Numbers of men engaged—General Joffre—Germans concentrate upon Esternay—Armies engaged thence to Verdun—Esternay retaken by the French—Description of the town and fight there—September 7—*Allies' general advance*—The fight to cross the Petit Morin River—Enemy in full retreat—September 8—Retreat continues—The British cavalry—The Petit Morin is crossed and freed—Heavy fighting with rearguards of retreating enemy—Onwards towards the Marne—The fighting on the Ourcq—British artillery's share—Fighting at Montmirail—General Foch pushes upwards past von Bülow's army—The Allies' nutcracker—The German nut—Fighting round Meaux—Description—Enemy in a vice—September 9—A critical stage—At La Ferte bridge—Enemy thrown across the Marne—The Ourcq again—General Maunoury—Esternay again—The French reach Château Thierry—Description of the operations—September 10—Sees close of battle—*Defeat of the enemy*—But he is not routed—von Kluck cut off from the east—Whole German line pressed back, including armies of von Hausen, Duke of Würtemberg, and Crown Prince—The French retake Châlons and Vitry-le-François—Decisive victory over Crown Prince—Description.

THE British themselves were no less moved with disgust and almost with despair at this awful experience of constant retreat. Certainly they were not then in their own country, fighting in their own land against a barbarous enemy in destructful occupation of one of its most valuable parts; but being the soldiers of the Expeditionary Force, nearly all of them men of experience in warfare, and all professional soldiers, the tactics of their commanders were bound to tend to depress them. It was, in fact, incomprehensible to the British soldier that the British army should retire in retreat, with seeming content, as it had now been so long doing. Inured to war and fighting as the men mostly were, having nearly all of them experienced the terrible days of the Boer campaign and the stiff, bloody fighting that was always recurrent in the near past on the Indian frontiers and other outposts of empire, they could not with any sort of satisfaction resign themselves to tactics such as these. They wanted, with a deep and almost overpowering desire, to get at the enemy and fight, even though it might be to a certain death.

CENTRAL EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN.

The London Geographical Institute

So strong was this feeling in the British army that the officers found it the most difficult part of their duty to maintain in the minds of the men a feeling that they were doing everything that was not only required of them, but that should rightly be done under the circumstances. The position soon became such that the officers had to discuss the position with their men in frank and straightforward man-to-man talk. The Commander-in-Chief himself, Sir John French, was as indefatigable in this respect as any other of the officers under his command. He spared himself no trouble and no hardship in order to be able to get about as far and as freely as possible among the men themselves in the



THE CLOSE OF THE GREAT RETREAT.

widely extended British lines; then, at times seated by the wayside with a group of men, himself forgetting, though the men could not forget, his great position, he would talk freely and quietly

with the soldiers, explaining the position, indicating generally his objects and his hopes, and encouraging them to further repression of their almost overpoweringly ardent instinct to fight forward instead of fall back.

And the position was indeed a serious one. The British troops were in Paris itself, and to the south-east of the city. What could save the city now from the attack of the enemy who, until then, had so victoriously and ruthlessly pressed back the Allies on to and beyond the French capital?

As a fact, the strategy of the French Generalissimo in thus retreating was nothing less than consummate. He knew that while the army of the Allies was in the field, unbeaten, in the neighbourhood of Paris, that and not the city must be the objective of the enemy. So, having completed the retreat, he disposed his forces in such order that their left flank was on and supported by Paris and their right flank on and supported by Verdun, the interval between these two points being solidly occupied throughout its entire length. Neither flank could be attacked by the enemy; Paris, by reason of the near vicinity of the Allied troops, was safe from an effective investment; and the Allies were ready, when the opportune moment arrived, for a frontal attack on the German lines.

Had von Kluck continued his advance southward on to Paris as he had done until September 5, he might have attempted to invest the city, but the operation, beyond any moral value, would have had little practical result. He did not attempt this, however, so it was apparent to the Commanders of the Allies that the Germans had some other plan in view. The question was what was that plan? Was it a frontal attack from the north, upon the Paris-Verdun line? A knowledge of the enemy's plan became possible, very soon, when Generals Joffre and French and those in command of the Allies received the reports of their air scouts—von Kluck, instead of continuing his advance right on to Paris itself, or on to the line of the Allies, was found to be turning his army to the east, so that, marching in that direction, his flank was more or less exposed to the line of the defenders. With their love of theatrical show the Germans intended that the Crown Prince's army, because of the fact that it was commanded by the Crown Prince himself, should be the main army in the attack on Paris, and to the Crown Prince should be the glory of the conquest and occupation of the city. The German Commander was accordingly marching eastward to join the Crown Prince, in order that the combined armies should then swoop down on Paris under the supreme command of the Crown Prince along the ideal strategic Reims-Paris road. The immediate task of

the Allies, therefore, and particularly the British, and the French in their neighbourhood, since much of the brunt of the operation would be in that place in the Allies' line, was to attack von Kluck's army on its rear and flanks, to envelop it, and thus prevent it reaching and joining up with the army of the Crown Prince.

Right through the operations up to this point the enemy had strictly adhered to the principle—one of the most favourite of German military science—of regarding the envelopment of his opponent as the first and most important of possible manœuvres. Now the position was such that not only had an envelopment of the Allies been rendered impossible—the retreat had utterly defeated the enemy's attempt at envelopment—but the German army ran a serious risk of itself being enveloped.

At the commencement of this new movement, von Kluck's army was, as it had thitherto always been, vastly superior, numerically, to the British forces and such of the French as were allied to them in this position. In round numbers, it was a case of 300,000 Germans against 100,000 British and French, the same proportion as had obtained right through the retreat from Mons. Relying upon this great superiority of his in numbers, and apparently under the vain and somewhat arrogant delusion that the commanders of the Allies were ignorant and incapable of the appropriate strategy and tactics, von Kluck, no doubt, thought that his flank movement towards the Crown Prince would be easily brought to a successful issue. Moreover, were not the British forces not only weak in numbers, but already exhausted by the period of exceptional stress through which they had recently passed whilst accomplishing their retreat—their exhaustion and consequent demoralisation being so extreme as to render them absolutely ineffective even in attack on his flank? He reckoned, however, without his host. Though naturally exhausted in body to a very considerable extent, yet the spirit of the British troops was now stronger, especially in the event of their taking the offensive, than ever before. Moreover, should the British now take the offensive against von Kluck they would have the assistance of a great army of French troops, including those which thitherto had been held in reserve. These reserves could easily, during the last few days, have been brought up to reinforce the British during their retreat, but General French and General Joffre had decided that under the circumstances it was wiser to keep them in reserve until that critical moment should arrive when the offensive could be taken by the Allies with the best chance of success.

That moment had now arrived. General Joffre was wheeling

up the left flank of his 6th army, pivoting it on the Marne, at Meaux, so that it should move on to the Ourcq and there cross and attack the rear of von Kluck's army. The British army in its turn was brought up to a front, so that its left rested on the river Marne. It was no longer the extreme left of the Allies' line. With the French 6th army on its left, it now had another French army, the 5th, supporting it on its right. The result of this disposition was that the Allies had a line composed of the 6th French army, the British army, and the 5th French army, ready to advance against the enemy on a general offensive movement. The line of the Allies had, moreover, been strongly reinforced in the Champagne, during the last days of the retreat, by bringing up such large numbers of reserves as made it possible to form two new French armies—those of Generals Foch and Maunoury.

On Sunday, September 6, at sunrise, this movement commenced and the initiative, now in the hands of the Allies, was directed from the west across the Ourcq against the rear of von Kluck's army, as it was endeavouring to pass along the Allies' front, and from the south against its flanks. Now was signally apparent the wisdom of the Commanders in suffering the great retreat from Mons without then calling up to the aid of the retreating army the reserves which had been held in great numbers behind and within the fortifications of Paris. The moment had come when the tide of the German invasion must turn, or in all probability the next position of the Allies would be on the Loire.

So both the French and the British Generals issued Orders of the Day to their respective armies emphasising the gravity of the situation. The French Order was as follows:

> At the moment when a battle on which the welfare of the country depends is about to begin, I feel it is my duty to remind you all that it is no longer the time to look behind. We have but one business on hand—to attack and drive back the enemy. An army which can no longer advance must at all costs hold the ground it has won, and allow itself to be slain where it stands rather than give way. This is no time for faltering, and it will not be tolerated.

The Order of Sir John French was in the following words:

> After a most trying series of operations, mostly in retirement, which have been rendered necessary by the general strategic plan of the Allied armies, the British forces stand to-day formed in line with their French comrades, ready to attack the enemy. Foiled in their attempt to invest Paris, the Germans have been driven to move in an easterly and south-easterly direction, with the apparent intention of falling in strength on

the 5th French army. In this operation they are exposing their right flank and their line of communications to an attack by the combined 6th French army and the British Forces.

I call upon the British army in France to show now to the enemy its power, and to push on vigorously to the attack beside the 6th French army.

I am sure I shall not call upon them in vain, but that, on the contrary, by another manifestation of the magnificent spirit which they have shown in the past fortnight, they will fall on the enemy's flank with all their strength, and in unison with their Allies drive them back.

The German Generals were equally alive to the critical nature of the occasion, and encouraged their troops with an Order as follows :

The object of our long and arduous marches has been achieved. The principal French troops have been forced to accept battle after having been continually forced back. The great decision is undoubtedly at hand. To-morrow, therefore, the whole strength of the German army, as well as that of all our army corps, is bound to be engaged along the whole line from Paris to Verdun. To save the welfare and honour of Germany I expect every officer and man, notwithstanding the hard and heroic fight of the last few days, to do his duty unswervingly and to the last breath. Everything depends on the result of to-morrow.

The great battle commenced in the early morning of this now ever-memorable Sunday. For five days it was fought in a number of contemporary and successive minor battles—though some of these were often of a most lengthy, extensive, and sanguinary character—with the most intense effort on each side, until a conclusion was forced in favour of the Allies on the evening of September 10.

The battle opened on a front extending from Ermenonville, which was just before the left flank of the 6th French army, through Lizy on the Ourcq, Mauperthuis, at about the British centre, Courtaçon, on the left of the 5th French army, to Esternay and Charleville, the left of the 9th army under General Foch, and so, through Sezanne, along the front of the 9th, 3rd, and 4th French armies to a point north of the fortress of Verdun—a length of about 150 miles.

Though from this it will be seen that fighting extended right along the line to Verdun, yet the great battle itself in its special intensity was limited to the line occupied by the 6th French army, the British army, the 5th French army, and the left wing of the 7th French army. Nevertheless, throughout the rest of the whole extent of the line fighting was continuous during the whole time.

By noon on the first day of the battle, the British forces were able to change their front to the right and occupy the advantageous line of Jouy le Châtel-Faremoutiers-Villeneuve le Comte, the 6th French army advancing north of the Marne, eastward towards the Ourcq. This movement of the Allies was the first great step towards success in the struggle which was now commencing. Having assumed the initiative, the Allies were following it up with remarkable ability and resource, so effectively, indeed, that even now, only a few hours after the commencement of the fight, von Kluck was forced by the powerful attack the Allies were making against the rear and flanks of his columns to begin a great retreat. The five days is a tale of that retreat—a retreat, on this occasion, on the part of the enemy.

On the evening of that day the fronts and positions of the opposing armies were, roughly, as follows:

The Allies

The 6th French army, under General Maunoury—right on the Marne at Meaux, left towards Betz—about 140,000 men. British forces under Sir John French—on the line Dagny-Coulommiers-Maison—about 110,000 men and 8,000 cavalry. 5th French army, under General D'Esperey—at Courtaçon, right on Esternay—about 150,000 men. General Conneau's Cavalry Corps—between the right of the British and the left of the French 5th army—about 23,000 men. Altogether about 430,000 men.

Germans

4th Reserve and 2nd Corps—east of the Ourcq and facing that river; 9th Cavalry Division—west of Crécy; 2nd Cavalry Division—north of Coulommiers; 4th Corps—Rebais; 3rd and 7th Corps—south-west of Montmirail: all these troops, 245,000 men with 23,000 cavalry, constituted the 1st German army, which, under the command of General von Kluck, was directed against the French 6th army on the Ourcq, and the British forces, and the left of the 5th army south of the Marne. The 2nd German army (IX, X, X.R., and Guard), under the command of General von Bülow, was moving its 180,000 men and 6,000 cavalry against the centre and right of the 5th and 9th French armies. Altogether about 450,000 men, with another 185,000 men, General von Hausen's Saxon army supporting them on the enemy's left.

A few words must be spared for the personality of the French Generalissimo. Joseph Joffre, the son of a well-to-do wine-grower,

was born in the vicinity of Rivesalte on the French side of the Pyrenees, in the year 1852—so little had he become the object of popular interest before the outbreak of the war, that his various biographers had not, up to the time of writing these lines, discovered the day and month of the year. Born in a countryside the characteristic human product of which is an emotional people of poetic and oratorical temperament, or a steady-going, hard peasantry, it is somewhat remarkable that Joffre should have distinguished himself more as a precise scientist than as a man of imagination or mere stolidity. His parents appear to have been more than ordinarily well-to-do, for Joffre, one of eleven children, received as his share of the patrimony no less a sum than about £6,000. His history, therefore, is not that of the poor youth struggling against financial adversity.

Deciding to enter the army, the young Joffre became a student at the Ecole Polytechnique, an institution corresponding to Woolwich in England. Here he made more than ordinary progress in his studies, so that, after leaving the school and joining the army, he became a captain at the age of twenty-two. So much appreciated were his abilities, particularly in respect to the construction of fortifications, that for some years he was assigned to work of this character in French China and Formosa. As a result of his brilliant work in Formosa, Joffre became Military Governor of Madagascar, his term of office coinciding with the commencement of that colony as a well-organised and prosperous community. From the beginning of his career in the army, when, before he left his country, he was engaged on the fortifications at Paris, until the period of his Governorship, his energies were confined entirely to the scientific and organising departments of military activities. He felt, however, that the time had arrived for him to take part in something of a more actively war-like character, and, fortunately being able to realise his ambition, was sent to Dahomey in command of the rearguard, under General Bonnier, in a campaign to subdue the natives. Bonnier was trapped and killed and his advance guard was almost annihilated. Joffre (Major, as he then was) saved the whole French column by a strategic move, drove back the natives, and achieved the distinction of being the first French army officer to reach Timbuctoo.

Joffre was now the object of some public attention, and good judges were already prophesying that the day would come when he would be at least a General. Having returned to Paris, he married and was appointed a professor in the War College. The political position in Paris was then very unsatisfactory and uncertain in regard to military and naval affairs. Eventually,

however, the authorities decided to do their best to organise an effective army and disregard the jealousies which existed between these two services, largely as a result of party politics. Joffre was appointed to the command of a Brigade, then to a Division, and finally to an Army Corps. His whole energies were now concentrated upon preparing the French army, so far as it was possible in the office to which he was confined, for the day when it would have to fight for the life of France. He reorganised the infantry on the most modern lines and made the cavalry perhaps the most efficient and daring in all Europe.

In 1911 he was placed in command of the French army, on the appointment of the General Council of War, his proposer being the distinguished one-armed veteran, General Pau. He pointed to Joffre as "the only possible man" for the position of Commander-in-Chief. Joffre thus owed his position to the army and to those who could best appreciate his professional and natural abilities. He owed nothing to the politicians, for, strict Republican as he is, he has ever known the danger to his country which results from the army being made a subject for rival political ambitions. But consistently with his republicanism he was no seeker after notoriety. If one looks in the French "Who's Who" of the year 1911, his name will not even be found there. The people knew him not. The experts in authority, however, knew him well.

And so, having attained the highest position in the French army, he continued in the path of strenuous effort, doing his best to make the army as effective as possible. No personal influences whatever were allowed to interfere with the attainment of his object. Dissatisfied with the operations of five generals of distinguished social and professional position at some manœuvres, he at once without any hesitation dismissed them. He had no fear whatever of the consequences of such an act, but disregarded entirely any social and political influences which might be brought to bear upon him in order that he might do something which he felt not best for the army. On the other hand, he kept around him and had with him at the outbreak of the war a staff of the best Generals to be found in the French army, quite regardless of their social position and political leanings, and these Generals, whatever their personal, social, political, or religious views might be, were and remained, as soldiers, his devoted admirers and servants.

In some respects the French Generalissimo reminds us of our own Lord Kitchener. He is a man of very few words and much thought and of sharp and decisive action. His first care is for

THE EFFECT OF BRITISH SHELL FIRE.

"Our artillery destroyed a convoy of motor transports on the road." The above photograph is of the wreckage cleared from the road afterwards, and gives a vivid impression of the deadly accuracy of our guns, both sides of the road being strewn with wreckage.

the army, other interests in life being relegated entirely to the background. But to return to the field of battle.

Esternay, upon which the right of the 5th French army rested, together with the plateau of Sezanne adjoining it on the east, was the immediate objective of the Germans. This small town, which has been described as standing in the same relation to Paris as Reading does to London, was the spot about which all the great roads from the north to Paris converged—from those in the west leading from where von Kluck was fighting to those in the extreme east leading from the neighbourhood in which the German Crown Prince was struggling to keep together his already badly shattered army.

At this moment the country right down to Esternay was overrun by the German troops.

The rest of the French line to Verdun was made up as follows, in the order given:—General Foch's army, the 9th, of about 120,000 men, with its left centre on Sezanne, General de Langle's army of 150,000 men, General Serrail's army of 120,000, and General Pau's army of 140,000. Altogether the Allies had an approximate strength of 960,000 men throughout their whole line. As opposed to this was the whole line of German troops, comprising approximately 1,100,000 men. Of these, von Kluck's, von Bülow's, and von Hausen's armies have already been mentioned, but the enemy's line was carried on to Verdun by the armies of Duke Albert of Würtemberg of 150,000 men, of the Crown Prince of Germany of 175,000 men, and of the Crown Prince of Bavaria of 160,000 men. As nearly as possible the French armies were opposed to the German so that one French army fronted the flank of one German army and the right flank of another, thus permitting one French General to direct operations against two German, and necessitating the direction of two German Generals against one French.

Already, since Saturday the 5th, the French had come into desperate conflict with the Germans at Esternay, succeeding before nightfall of the Sunday, or at the latest the dawn of the Monday, in driving them from the town and neighbourhood.

The following is the impression of a *Times* correspondent on entering the town soon after its reoccupation by the French:

> At Esternay, close to Sezanne, one felt in the presence of a tragedy. Many houses in the village were battered, with gaping holes in them and walls spattered with bullet marks. Here was a house with the walls pierced, there one in which the cornice had disappeared. Little village shops bore evidence that the Germans had taken a fiendish delight in destroying everything and in breaking windows like mischievous schoolboys. Unfor-

tunately their exploits had not ended here, and one felt beneath the apparent calm of the villagers just now returning to their devastated habitations the nightmare of the German occupation.

The crime of the invaders appeared on the threshold of the village. At the Café de la Gare the landlord pointed to a little mound in a field adjacent; a German Commandant was buried there. His place of execution was the wall of the café, and the instrument the revolver of a French captain. It was punishment for an odious crime. When the Germans entered the village on the evening of Saturday, September 5, they committed wholesale robbery and drank everything they could find. Many inhabitants fled, but others remained, amongst whom was the sister of a café keeper opposite the Café de la Gare. He himself told me the story. She was a young woman in the twenties. Drunken German officers required her to serve them. Their tastes were in the direction of Roman orgy. When she refused to obey their behests, they slew her. A ringleader of the miscreants was the German Commander, who was found by the French in hiding on their arrival in the village, and was taken and executed as I have described.

The Germans had mounted a machine gun on the café, just as they mounted one on the turret of the church above which floated the Red Cross flag—a symbol of their treachery. In the church itself they took out pews and installed beds for their wounded. They stole the gold Communion service, leaving only silver vessels of little value.

Everywhere in the countryside one heard of deprivations and atrocities. Opposite the church was a small shop. The wife of the proprietor was a good-looking woman who suffered indignities at their hands, and is still feeling the effects of the shock. A man who accompanied my friend and myself into the church remarked that his own sister had been killed by Germans.

It is apparent that the French surprised the Germans at Esternay. They had drunk an immense quantity of wine. Every cellar in the place was ransacked. Up at the château they had consumed the contents of 3,000 bottles in the cellar, mostly champagne. This was told me by one of the doctors nursing the wounded in the château, now converted into a hospital. The fact that a large part of the German force was drunk explained to some extent the success of the French, who arrived in the country practically unobserved. The German occupation lasted from Saturday afternoon until early Monday morning, when the enemy rapidly disappeared in the direction of Soissons. Following their usual custom, they took ten villagers as hostages, including the Mayor and the Curé. One of these prisoners, an elderly man, white-haired and apparently about seventy, with whom I spoke, said they were kept without food for two days. Happily there was something to drink, as they were interned in premises of a *marchand de vin.*

Empty wine bottles are to be seen everywhere. They lie in gutters in the village, and in ditches along the country road. They have been flung over walls and litter the battlefield—that interminable battlefield which stretches to the horizon and beyond. In the château are French

and German wounded, about 250. One of the doctors explained that he was unable to join his army corps at the front owing to the dangerous state of many of the wounded. The château itself has suffered considerably from bombardment. Being occupied by German officers, it was shelled by French artillery. A large hole was made in the turret and several outer walls are perforated. The proprietor escaped before the arrival of the enemy, who took everything, including the silver.

In the fight which occurred in the fields around the château, the Prussian Imperial Guard appear to have suffered severely. They were opposed by the 75th Regiment of Infantry, which also paid dearly for its success. The French arrived from the south, their artillery occupying the crests of the hills commanding the wooded valley of the Grand Morin. The French infantry crept through the woods from the river and advanced towards the enemy occupying an entrenched position along the road, backed by machine guns. To assault the position they had to pass over a stretch of ploughed field and stubble, and it was there that many Frenchmen lost their lives. Whilst the action was going on, the French artillery on the heights shelled the village to drive out the Germans. The severity of the engagement is attested by the many graves which abound in the neighbourhood; every field has its row of little mounds, and under one of them is said to be the grandson of the famous Von Moltke.

That day, Monday, witnessed a general advance on the part of the Allies, our forces pushing on in a north-easterly direction, the French 5th army advancing to the north and the French 6th army advancing eastward against the German rearguard along the Ourcq, the British advance to the north-east being made possible largely by reason of the great vigour with which our cavalry acted, especially General de Lisle's 9th Lancers and the 18th Hussars. The cavalry of the enemy covering his retreat suffered very severely. In their northward retreat the Germans were thrown back to the line of the Petit Morin river, having been forced into that position by a brilliant attack upon them at Montceaux, which place was carried by the French at the point of the bayonet, the Germans suffering severe loss. The artillery, British and French, was most deadly, worked as it was in conjunction with the reconnaissance of our airmen. The net effect of these operations was to clear the valley of the Ourcq of the Germans and at length to relieve Paris from the immediate prospect of invasion.

This was the first time the German troops had turned back since the commencement of their invasion, and from reports received the order to retire when so close to Paris was a bitter disappointment to the men. From letters found on the dead there is no doubt that there was an impression among the enemy troops that they were about to enter Paris.

On the following day, the retreat of the enemy continued, every inch, however, of the way being stubbornly fought. On the road to the Petit Morin river a terrific struggle took place between the Germans and the British 1st Army Corps, success resting with the Allies, however, the Germans being forced back to the Petit Morin river. Here, on both sides of the river, the enemy were thrown back with heavy loss, the river itself being forced at a point just north of La Tretoire, an operation in which the British cavalry took a leading part, the river being also forced higher up the stream by the 1st Division. In the neighbourhood of La Tretoire the enemy occupied a strong position with infantry and guns on the northern bank of the Petit Morin, from which they were dislodged with considerable difficulty, several machine guns and many prisoners being captured and about 200 German dead being left on the ground. Later in the day a counter-attack by the enemy was well repulsed by Sir Douglas Haig's 1st Army Corps, a great many prisoners and some guns falling into our hands.

Once across the Petit Morin, having freed it from Trilport along to a point north of La Tretoire, the Germans were closely pressed by the Allies, so that as they retreated north-eastward their rearguard on the south of the Marne was pressed back to that river by the British troops and by the French on our right, the latter capturing three villages in a hand-to-hand fight and inflicting severe loss upon the enemy. Along the Ourcq, fighting of a most sanguinary character continued during the whole of the day, the Germans having massed a great force of artillery along this line. Here the French, as they doggedly fought their way to the right bank, were greatly assisted by the British, who shelled the enemy with deadly effect from their position to the east of Meaux. Very few of the infantry of the Germans were seen by the French. The fight was almost entirely one of artillery. In the extreme east of this field of battle, about the Petit Morin, a fierce engagement took place between the Germans and D'Esperey's 5th French army at Montmirail, which resulted in the French regaining possession of that place and laying bare the right flank of von Bülow's army to the east. General Foch was quick to take advantage of this, completing a hard day's fighting on the plateau of Sezanne by pushing his army northward past the now helpless von Bülow.

So Tuesday the 8th passed, a day crowded in its every moment with fighting of the fiercest character. The Allies were operating as though they were a nut-cracker, the enemy taking the part of the doomed nut. The pivot of these operations was at and in the neighbourhood of Meaux:

Meaux and its fine old cathedral church [wrote a *Times* correspondent] happily suffered little from the battle which raged around them. The town was only occupied by small parties of Germans, and the bombardment which it had to undergo after they had evacuated it did not do much damage. It was on the heights above the town, and particularly in the villages of Chambry and Barcy, that the fighting was fiercest. They were carried by the French after a tremendous struggle on Monday afternoon. The Germans made a determined attempt to recapture them during the night, and a terrible infantry battle went on in the moonlight. Yesterday it was continued in the form of an artillery duel; to-day, when I reached the French positions, the German fire was already slackening. Their batteries only replied occasionally to the steady fire of the French, and they were obviously firing only to cover a retreat. Late in the afternoon their guns were completely silenced, and at least four of them were found by the French wrecked in their positions.

When I reached the village of Chambry it was occupied by the Zouaves from Tunis whom I had seen marching out of Paris fresh for battle last week. Tuesday's struggle had been their first serious engagement, and they had suffered terribly heavily. One company had 120 men left out of 220, and one officer; another company had lost 70. The men told me the same old story that I have heard from every force of infantry which has been heavily engaged with the Germans. The mitrailleuses had mown them down by dozens; the survivors could not understand how even they were left alive. In this case the French had lacked artillery to support them, and the fire of the Germans had been deadlier than ever. The buildings of the village were torn by shell fire, and all round it the marks of the fighting were to be seen. The dead had not been entirely removed, and here and there the huddled bodies lay half hidden in the clover. Piles of brass shell cases lying amid rings of dead horses showed the emplacements of the French batteries. The ground all about was pitted by the explosions of the German shells, and the blasted trees and gutted farm-buildings showed what a hell the place must have been when the battle was at its height.

To-day the Germans' attack had been rolled far away and the cheerful Zouaves were enjoying a rest. The capture of 500 Germans this morning, near Barcy, was their most recent triumph, and they were anxious to hear how their British Allies were doing along the line of the Marne to the eastward.

And again:

On Monday the fighting round Meaux reached a terrible pitch of ferocity. The Germans had determined to cross the Marne here so as to break up the Allies and open the way to Paris. They made tremendous attempts to construct bridges over the river. The French had blown up all the existing bridges, and covered the river with their heavy guns. Time after time the enemy's engineers attempted to place their pontoons in position. Each time, as soon as the work began, a hail of shells descended. The losses were terrific.

At one point sixteen attempts at bridge-building were thus foiled. At the final attempt a mass of soldiers were hurled into the water. One soldier told me that he personally counted 600 corpses in one of the German trenches in this region. After the battle, when the enemy retired, the country was strewn with dead and dying. It was a fearful spectacle. Here a horse lay with its legs stiff stuck up in the air, another, behind which two soldiers had sought cover, lacerated with shot, the two men dead; close behind them eight dead horses and five men surrounding a gun—the victims of an exploding shell.

"Our men," an officer told me, "were wonderful around Meaux. I was at Charleroi, but I never saw anything to equal this scene. In spite of orders, some of them actually charged a machine gun. They fell, so very many of them—but we won through."

That day the Germans fell back both along the Ourcq and the Marne. And curiously enough, during this time of retreat, they seem to have greatly slackened their rifle fire. In one place they retired some 20 kilometres without firing a single shot. They were literally decimated. Our men came up with them finally and took seven cannon, two machine guns, and about 1,000 prisoners. One of the prisoners confessed that they had run short of ammunition. They had been ordered to save it as much as possible! On Monday night the news spread all along the ranks of the Allies that September 6 and 7 had been good days for the cause.

We have described the operations of the Allies on these rivers, the Ourcq, the Grand Morin and the Petit Morin, and the Marne, as comparable to that of a nut-cracker, with Meaux as its pivot. To the north-east of this pivot one handle of the nut-cracker was at work extending along a distance of ten or fifteen miles. On the opposite or lower side, to the south-east, extending over an almost semicircular distance of about fifty miles, the British army with the French on its left and right were operating. The north-eastern handle was being pressed downwards to the south-east, the other long-extended handle being pressed upwards towards the north. The Germans were in a vice, though, because of the fact that three rivers, the Petit Morin, the Marne, and the Ourcq ran through the territory on which they fought, they were able to fight with the advantage due to these natural obstacles to the movements of the Allies. And Meaux, being the pivot or hinge of this instrument which was threatening them with destruction, was naturally one of the chief objectives of their attack.

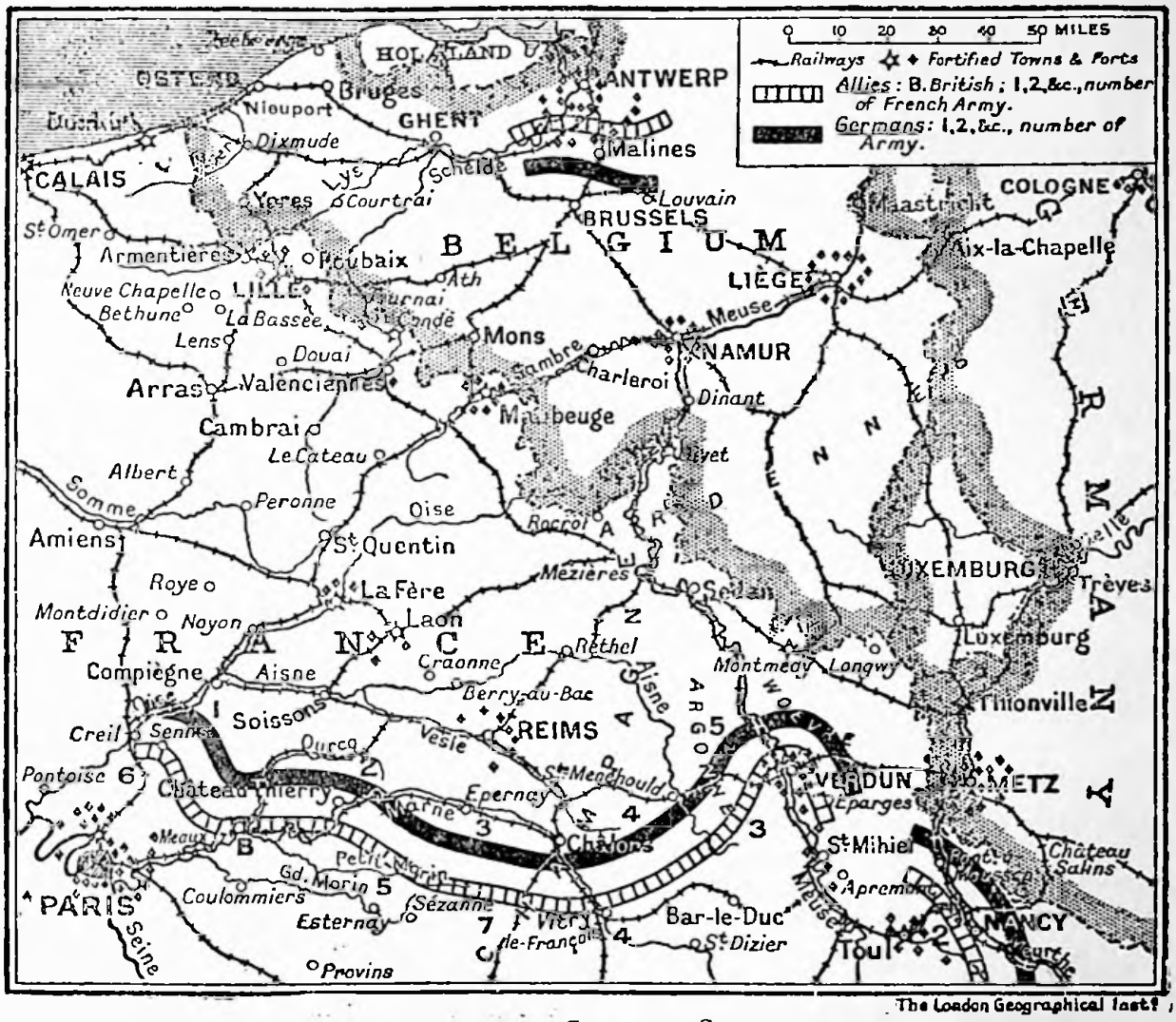
The next day, the 9th, amid ceaseless rain and over sodden, heavy ground, fighting proceeded even more strenuously and severely than before. The operations were now at a most critical stage.

The British were determined to thrust the enemy over the Marne and themselves occupy the northern bank. The 1st and 2nd Army Corps performed this operation not only with success,

AN ATTACK LED BY A BOMBING PARTY.

Plunging across broad ditches of mud and a forest of barbed wire and other entanglements, through shell, machine gun, and rifle fire, our men, each armed with five or six hand-grenades, hurled themselves against the German line, bombing them as the Germans broke and fled in terror like frightened rats at the sight of the bayonet.

but with comparative ease. The 3rd Corps, however, whose task it was to force the river at La Ferte, had no such luck. The town of La Ferte was situated on the northern side of the river



THE RETREAT OF THE GERMANS, SEPTEMBER 9.

and was occupied by a strong rearguard of the enemy and machine guns. The bridge had been destroyed. The British, however, set to work to construct another bridge, and right through the day, in face of a deadly obstruction by the artillery of the enemy, they endeavoured to complete their work. At times their bridge would be almost complete, only to be destroyed again by the enemy. Nevertheless British persistency was in the end successful, and after nightfall our army was able to effect the passage of the river.

On the Ourcq, to the west of these operations, heavy fighting was taking place between the enemy and the French, the former having largely increased his strength both in men and material. The French, however, were successful throughout.

General Maunoury, who was here in command, was deservedly one of the most popular and trusted of the French Commanders, ranking, in the estimation of his countrymen, next after Joffre and even before the veteran Pau. His wonderful victory on the Ourcq not only paved the way for the triumph at the Marne, but also saved Paris and perhaps France. He was military governor of the capital two years before the war broke out, but though he had retired from the active list by reason of having attained the age limit, yet, at the commencement of hostilities, he offered himself again, only too anxious, despite his advanced years, to take his place in the fighting line in defence of his beloved country.

To the south-east, fighting was very severe between the French, advancing northwards from Esternay and Sezanne, and the Germans; but nevertheless, notwithstanding the powerful and persistent resistance opposed to their progress by the Germans at Montmirail, the French, aided by the terrible execution done by their 75 mm. guns, were able to reach the Marne at Château-Thierry, and, heroically charging the enemy with their bayonets, drove him completely north of the river with great loss.

The result of this day's operations was, therefore, that the southern wing of the Allies had reached the Marne, throwing back the Germans in front of them, the French fronting the Ourcq having, in the meanwhile, more than held their position.

The incidents of Wednesday [wrote a correspondent of the *Telegraph*] will astound the world when they are made known in full. I am aware, for example, of a mighty charge by the Turcos on that day; and I know that 100 of their fierce fighters took 200 German prisoners after a fight which is described as one of the most terrible single combats of the war—a matter of swords and bayonets. I know, also, that two German detachments of some 1,000 men each, which were surrounded and cornered but which refused to surrender, were wiped out almost to the last man. Honour to their courage. These are incidents, but they carry conviction.

The tremendous attack of the Allies along the Ourcq on Tuesday is the keynote to these doings of Wednesday. It was this terrific attack which suddenly showed the German Commander that his lines of communication were threatened, and which, in company with the splendid stand of his enemy at Sezanne, caused him to retreat with all haste in a northerly direction.

Now came the crowning stroke. The army of the Ourcq and of Meaux and the army of Sezanne drew together like the blades of a pair of scissors, the pivot of which was in the region of the Grand Morin. The German retreat was thus forced towards the east and speedily became a rout. I repeat that England scarcely realises as yet what Wednesday and Thursday have achieved, alike in breaking up the enemy and in heartening our troops. Guns, ammunition, hospital stores, and thousands of prisoners have been

taken. The tactics of Mons and Charleroi are justified to the hilt. Torrential rain fell all day to-day, with a terrific wind, which must have greatly affected the German retreat.

On the 10th, by eventide, the rain having poured down in torrents right through the day, the great battle was at an end, and the 1st and 2nd German armies were in full retreat to the north. The 6th French army on the west and, with the British between, the 5th French army moving up from the south past Château-Thierry by forced marches, were as wings enveloping the retreating army struggling northwards. But though retreating the enemy was desperately, yet in well-ordered fashion, opposing his conquerors by strong rearguards of all arms. These were very effectively dealt with by the British 1st and 2nd Corps, assisted by the Cavalry Division on the right and the 3rd and 5th Cavalry Brigades on the left, 13 guns, 7 machine guns, about 2,000 prisoners, and quantities of transport falling into the hands of our army. The enemy also left very many dead on the field —it was reported, about 2,000 men. To the north of the Marne, where the country is studded with numerous thick woods, were found in these woods great numbers of killed and wounded, many of them appearing to have been without food for at least two days.

A frontal attack such as that of the Germans on our army which necessitated the retreat from Mons can rarely, when the retreating army is in good hands, mean in itself a decisive victory to the pursuers. In order that an engagement should have a decisive result it is necessary that the enemy should be either routed or forced to surrender. So long as the enemy can retreat in well-ordered fashion he is able to organise and reorganise himself and may find an opportunity suddenly to take up the initiative and to fight again on the offensive. An operation such as that carried out by the Allies during these last four days was one which, if successful at all, was bound to be for the time being decisive. Once the enemy is forced into a position in which he plays the part of nut to the other side's nut-cracker, he is bound, if he cannot escape, to be either destroyed entirely or routed. In this case, notwithstanding the desperate efforts of the Germans to escape from the position in which they found themselves, particularly by attempting to destroy the opposing operation by breaking through the pivot at Meaux, the enemy was so far routed, though he still was able to maintain a fairly effective organisation, that the Allies found themselves most decisively victors in occupation of the Marne. What saved the German situation as a whole was the fact that both armies, that of the victors as well as the con-

quered, were utterly worn out and wearied as a consequence of the continuous strain they had suffered since the commencement of the retreat from Mons. The Allies were too fatigued to follow up their victory.

Von Kluck, now forced northward in a retreat which just missed being a rout, could of course no longer assist the rest of the German advance in its attempt upon Paris. As a fact, he had much to be thankful for, in that he was able to escape at all. During these four days he had been forced northward thirty-seven to forty-seven miles. His one task now was to allow his army a moment's rest. Even the reinforcements he had recently received, consisting of about 40,000 men released by the fall of Maubeuge, could give him no real advantage.

So this great victory of the Allies on the Marne meant something more than merely local success. It meant that the German line from Verdun, in fact the whole of its right wing, was checked and pressed backwards to the north. Not only was the army of von Kluck thrown back, but that of von Bülow on his left had also been forced to retreat before the French. In connection with this retreat some most sanguinary conflicts took place between the Germans and the French in the region extending from the plateau at the north of Sezanne to Vitry-le-François. With von Bülow thus thrown back, von Kluck's only chance of recovering himself was lost.

On the left of the army of von Bülow were the Saxon army of von Hausen and a part of the army commanded by the Duke of Würtemberg. By attacks of the most violent character, continuously repeated, the Germans attempted to break through the French lines, but without success. On the contrary, the success of the French on the plateau of Sezanne under Generals Foch and Langle was such that they were enabled to take up the offensive, and in the course of the night of the 9th, the enemy, having been defeated along the French front extending by the marshes of St. Gond and the region of Sommesous, fell back in some confusion upon the region immediately to the west of Vitry-le-François. Foch was now in the neighbourhood of Châlons and Langle was in occupation of Vitry.

Upon the river Ornain, between the Argonne and the Meuse, at the extreme east of the German right wing, there took place during the course of the battle a long, persistent conflict, at one moment the Germans gaining ground, at another the French, whose army there was under the command of General Serrail, but in the end without any decisive advantage accruing to either side. But this was in the result a decided check to the enemy, who

must have been particularly galled by it. Not only was the enemy there represented by the army of the German Crown Prince, but the check it received did as much as anything else in the whole of the operations of the past week to break up and destroy once for all the German plan of campaign.

Having thus reached the German Crown Prince, at the end of this great battle, he must not be left without attention being drawn to the following remarkable dispatch of a correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*. In this we are told of a decisive victory of the French over the Crown Prince on September 6 and 7 in the early part of the great five days' battle. It is said that the extent of this victory was not known to the French themselves until some time afterwards, and so was not officially announced, but it may be that the "long, persistent conflict" referred to above summarises the whole of the operations against the army of the Crown Prince during the entire period of the battle. One thing is certain: his progress was checked from September 5.

Contrary to the general impression, the great battles round Paris did not begin with the defeat of General von Kluck. That Commander's misfortunes were due directly to the retirement of the German left wing on the night of September 6–7. The mystery which has surrounded the movements of the German armies disappears now that we know that the main body of the Crown Prince's army retired 40 kilometres during that night. Such a retirement amounts to a rout.

In the plan of the German operations, the path that promised the greatest glory was reserved for the Crown Prince. This was in accordance with the policy of bolstering up the fast-fading popularity of the house of Hohenzollern. Throughout Germany he was acclaimed as the hero of Longwy. His futile demonstration against Verdun was magnified into a series of glorious assaults. In official bulletins he was declared to have inflicted a severe defeat on the French. As a matter of fact the French army opposed to him has been carrying out a splendid defensive retirement. Opposed by superior numbers, they have contested with stubbornness every inch of the ground lost. And in the end they assumed the offensive in a most effective manner.

The Germans advanced on the line Verdun-Ste. Menehould-Châlons sur Marne. Their progress was exceedingly rapid. When the Uhlans of Kluck's force were in Chantilly, the main body of the Kaiser's heir's army was yet 200 kilometres away. Then this army was ordered to push on with all speed. The order of march of the German army up the Champs Elysées was being drawn up. And as the Crown Prince was to head this historic march, undoubtedly dressed in the uniform of his pet regiment, the Death's Head Hussars, the French troops opposing him must be brushed aside.

The left wing of the Germans gave battle on Sunday, September 6.

The fighting began at daybreak, and continued with unprecedented fury until dark. The artillery fire went beyond anything the history of warfare has hitherto recorded. Shells were timed to be falling at the rate of thirty in thirty seconds. I have this from a trustworthy source. In this day's fighting the French guns were served with undeniable superiority. The loss they inflicted upon the Germans can never be approximately estimated. The total loss of the Germans is placed at figures so high I hesitate to record them—100,000, of whom 20,000 were killed. This estimate is made by a trained observer, who was on the battlefield before the dead had been touched.

It must be remembered that the German army was advancing on a front nearly forty miles in extent, and the country north-east of Sezanne is the most treacherous in all France. Acres upon acres of marsh lands line the valleys. Here it was the enemy suffered most.

But the French also made the most severe sacrifices. A certain corps was practically wiped out of existence. Spurred by the knowledge that they were fighting for the very existence of Paris, each French soldier was as three. Against the desperate resistance they made, the Germans could do nothing.

When the night of September 6 closed down neither army could claim much advantage in position gained.

The French had made certain gains, but they had also fallen back at points. An enormous quantity of ammunition had been used up. The total artillery expenditure is put at 4,000 shells. Hundreds of caissons were empty.

Then on the night of September 6–7 came the retreat. The long line was giving way, not only on the right towards Paris, but also on the left, where there seems to have been heavy fighting about Verdun.

It has been suggested that there was a breakdown in the transport service in this direction. If this were the case, after the enormous expenditure of ammunition during the first day of action, the Crown Prince's army would have been obliged to fall back or be captured.

The circumstances of their precipitate flight incline me to the last explanation. Of course, the fighting on this wing continued for several days, but the Germans were only trying to save what was left of a badly crippled army from complete destruction.

AN INCIDENT IN THE BATTLES OF THE MEUSE.

The region between the Meuse and the upper courses of the Aisne, forming a plateau of wooded hills referred to in despatches as the "Argonne,' was a difficult country from a military point of view, and was the scene of desperate and stubborn battles. Villages in this region frequently passed alternately from French to German hands.

CHAPTER XII

THE OCCUPATION OF THE AISNE

The effect of the Battle of the Marne—The character of the territory now being fought over—*Germans, to succeed, must attack*—They intend to envelop the Allies' left wing—Allies prepared—The "Rush to the Sea"—September 11, pursuit of enemy commenced—September 12—*Battle of the Aisne begins*—The Aisne Valley—The Allies attempt to cross the river—Description of "Eye-Witness"—Enemy evacuates Vitry-le-François—Gives way right along the line—The battle area a "kingdom of death"—September 13—Enemy continues his retreat—The Allies begin to cross the Aisne in great force—Amiens evacuated—Letter from his wife to dead German soldier—Difficulties of the British in crossing the river—The fight for the heights—Condition of the country now freed from the invader—Senlis—Crépy—Villers-Cotterets—Reims—The proclamation there—German savagery at Senlis—September 14—*Enemy settles down to a vigorous defensive*—British reinforcements passed across the river—Enemy again pressed back—September 15—Attack and counter-attack continuous along the whole line—September 16 and 17—Desperate fighting—The spirit of the troops—A French *Ordre du Jour*—Description of the operations by "Eye-Witness"—September 18 and 19—Little progress, but General Joffre develops a new plan of campaign—Sir John French makes his preparations accordingly—Enemy aeroplanes brought down—September 20 to 22—Only slight progress—Active bombardment by enemy—His object—Its failure—September 23 to 25—The eve of the great struggle—French and Germans each reorganise their lines—The Allies bring up heavier guns—September 26—*The great battle at its critical stage*—Summary of the results of the immediately preceding operations—The German army badly led and organised—Its soldiers losing confidence and heart—Diary of German officer—The night of the 27th and 28th—Enemy now puts forth his supreme effort—The end of September—The important advantage obtained by the Germans at St. Mihiel—The damage done to the towns—Reims—A premeditated outrage—General results of the struggle on the Aisne—Neither the plan of the Allies nor that of the Germans crowned with success, but the enemy had been checked and thrown back—So far it was a defeat for him.

THE net effect of the Battle of the Marne was to establish very nearly an equilibrium between the opposing armies. It was a decided defeat of the Germans in the sense that not only had their progress towards Paris been arrested but they had been thrown back a considerable distance with great loss. In that measure it was an important victory for the Allies. Nevertheless, the enemy yet remained in occupation—and it eventually turned out to be a very permanent occupation—of a considerable part of the northern territory of France; but at the same time his plan of campaign had, for the time being, been entirely upset.

It is worthy of notice in this connection that the campaign now in progress was, by some malignant fate, passing over one of the busiest industrial districts in Europe. The frontiers of France

were here the scene of a remarkable distribution of manufacturing centres. The Belgian and German frontiers in this neighbourhood were also studded with an extraordinary number of manufacturing towns. To restrict our observation, however, to France alone, it will be seen that from Lille all the way to Grenoble, groups of industries followed the frontier line at intervals, and many of these districts had become the scenes of relentless fighting and ruthless destruction. Amiens, Valenciennes, and St. Quentin were towns possessing a large industrial element; as also was Reims, though best known to fame as the ancient seat of a venerable cathedral. Pont-à-Mousson, too, one of the first places to be bombarded by the Germans, but now soon to be retaken, had of late years become an almost entirely manufacturing town. Farther to the east, Belfort, though most popularly associated with its fortifications, was an important manufacturing centre, as also were Epinal and Nancy. Among scenes of industry and commerce such as these the campaign was now raging—enormous masses of men passing with their accompanying cavalry raids and their attendant baggage trains, stupendous battles being fought, and churches, public buildings, and factories, as well as the natural features of the land, being defaced or obliterated, and very often the habitations of men with them. The peasantry were being deprived of all they possessed and reduced to absolute misery, factory owners, their employees, and the commercial classes generally, finding themselves in a similarly unfortunate plight.

As against an enemy occupying a territory of this character only one course was possible. The Allies were bound to fight, to conquer, to drive him away, and to do so quickly. That this effort should be made was necessary for the well-being of the countryside, though apart from such a consideration the Allies were happily in a position in which time was of far greater value to the enemy than to themselves. Should the war degenerate into a long-drawn-out struggle between the respective staying powers of the two armies, Germany, less rich in men and in provisions and munitions of war than the Allies, powerless upon the sea, was beaten in advance. The Prussian Generals and statesmen knew this well; they had said it and written it a hundred times. To attack, to attack so as to profit by the advance achieved, to attack before the Russians and the British could prepare and mobilise their reserves, to attack in order to paralyse any possible ideas of intervention on the part of hostile neutrals, and to attack always—that was the only road of safety for Germany, and she must necessarily and inevitably attack until her

last breath had been drawn, for, when she should cease to attack, she could be annihilated at one blow. The position now, through the Allies having successfully resumed the offensive, was singularly favourable for them as against the Germans, who for the time being had lost the initiative.

The enemy had only himself to blame for finding himself in the position he now occupied. In the Battle of the Marne, which he had just lost, he had neglected adherence to the most insistent of German military precepts, the Principle of Envelopment, and, instead of turning the Allies, had offered combat under circumstances in which his own army had found its flanks compromised. One could not expect, however, that the enemy would repeat the mistake. Without doubt his forces would now be directed towards making up for the opportunity he had missed at the Marne. And to begin it was necessary for him so skilfully to manœuvre on the Aisne as to put into practice another principle of warfare, thitherto entirely forgotten or ignored by him, namely, that of economising his strength. It was accordingly not to be expected that he would begin a general offensive against all points in the Allies' line. His *modus operandi* would be to oppose an active defensive in the centre, the Allies meanwhile possibly offering him an opportunity of concentrating his greatest strength upon the wings and so bending the adverse line, or at the centre.

The Allies were quite prepared for an operation of either character. In the words of the French official review which was published on March 24, 1915, "Everything led us to expect that flanking movement, for the Germans are lacking in invention. Indeed, their effort at that time tended to a renewal of their manœuvre of August 11."

The Allies, divining thus the intention of the enemy, manœuvred accordingly. They initiated a persistent extension of the west extremity of their line, opposing, as they moved, any like extension that the Germans might attempt of the invading right wing. This meant that the Allies engaged in a strenuous effort to extend their left wing to the sea itself, thereby preventing any possible envelopment by the enemy, the latter endeavouring meanwhile to prevent that operation. So, from September 13, the opposing armies were engaged in the "Rush to the Sea." As early as September 11 the French Commander-in-Chief directed his left army to have as important forces as possible on the right bank of the Oise. On September 17 he made that extension more precise by ordering an army to be placed on the left wing of the Allied position capable of coping with the always extending, outflanking movement of the enemy. In this parallel race the

opponents were bound in the end to be stopped only by the sea; and that is what happened about October 20.

In this great rush to the sea, the Germans, from the commencement, enjoyed a great advantage over the Allies, the concentric form of their front shortening very considerably the length of their transports. In spite, however, of their inferiority of position, the Allies arrived, as we shall see, at their destination in full time. From the middle of September to the last week in October fighting went on generally to the north of the Oise, but all the time the Allies were fighting they were steadily slipping northward.

September 10 saw the close of the Battle of the Marne and the defeat, for the moment, of the enemy. Already on that day he was in full retreat, though not routed, the Allies pressing closely on his rear.

On the following day, the 11th, the further pursuit of the enemy was commenced in the early morning by the British Expeditionary Force. The three corps crossed the Ourcq practically unopposed, the cavalry reaching the line of the Aisne River, the 3rd and 5th Brigades threatening Soissons on the south, and the 1st, 2nd, and 4th attaining the high ground at Couvrelles and Cerseuil. Generally during that day the success of the Allies, along the whole length of their line, was accentuated, their progress continuing north of the Marne and in the directions of Soissons and Compiègne. The Germans abandoned much of their munition and material and many wounded and prisoners. The French captured a new flag which, to a Continental army—for the British do not take their flags into action—is regarded as a feat of signal importance. The British army seized 11 cannons, a considerable quantity of material, and made nearly 1,500 men prisoners. In the centre of the Allied line the enemy gave way along the whole front between Sezanne and Revigny. In spite of the efforts of the soldiery of the Allies during the course of the last week's fighting they had found sufficient energy closely to follow up and continue to press the enemy.

The operation known to fame as the Battle of the Aisne may be said to have commenced on the following day, the 12th, when in the afternoon the enemy—for a moment at any rate—had arrested his retreat and was prepared to dispute the passage of the river with some vigour. The position held by the enemy was a very strong one, either for delaying action or for a defensive battle. One of its chief military characteristics was that from the high ground on either side the top of the plateau on the other side could be well seen except for small stretches. This was chiefly

due to the woods on the edges of the slopes. Another important point is that all the bridges were under either direct or high-angle artillery fire. Sir John French thus described the topographical conditions :

The Aisne Valley runs generally east and west, and consists of a flat-bottomed depression of width varying from half a mile to two miles, down which the river follows a winding course to the west, at some points near the southern slopes of the valley, and at others near the northern. The high ground both on the north and south of the river is approximately 400 ft. above the bottom of the valley, and is very similar in character, as are both slopes of the valley itself, which are broken into numerous rounded spurs and re-entrants. The most prominent of the former are the Chivre spur on the right bank and Sermoise spur on the left. Near the latter place the general plateau on the south is divided by a subsidiary valley of much the same character, down which the small River Vesle flows to the main stream near Sermoise. The slopes of the plateau overlooking the Aisne on the north and south are of varying steepness, and are covered with numerous patches of wood, which also stretch upwards and backwards over the edge on the top of the high ground. There are several villages and small towns dotted about in the valley itself, and along its sides, the chief of which is the town of Soissons.

The Aisne is a sluggish stream of some 170 ft. in breadth, but, being 15 ft. deep in the centre, it is unfordable. Between Soissons on the west and Villers on the east (the part of the river attacked and secured by the British forces) there are eleven road bridges across it. On the north bank a narrow-gauge railway runs from Soissons to Vailly, where it crosses the river and continues eastward along the south bank. From Soissons to Sermoise a double line of railway runs along the south bank, turning at the latter place up the Vesle Valley towards Bazoches. . . .

The tract of country above described, which lies north of the Aisne, is well adapted to concealment, and was so skilfully turned to account by the enemy as to render it impossible to judge the real nature of his opposition to our passage of the river, or to accurately gauge his strength.

The battle commenced. The Allies, not then knowing that they were engaging in a struggle which would last, as practically one battle, for at least a fortnight, believed that most probably the fight would be nothing more than a small rear-action on a large scale. Rain began to fall heavily, continuing all through the night, creating conditions not only of great discomfort to the men, but of such a character that their operations, particularly those of transport, were severely handicapped.

The British army found itself encountering considerable opposition south of Missy and Vailly, the French army being strenuously engaged to the west of Soissons. To the south of that town the Germans were holding Monte de Paris, and a great

fight ensued in which the artillery played an important part. The French eventually drove the enemy back across the river at Soissons, where they destroyed the bridges. The following is the account given by the official "Eye-Witness" at Headquarters of the operations of this day:

On Saturday, September 12, the enemy were found to be occupying a very formidable position opposite to us on the north of the Aisne. At Soissons they held both sides of the river and an entrenched line on the hills to the north. Of eight road bridges and two railway bridges crossing the Aisne within our section of front, seven of the former and both of the latter had been demolished. Working from west to east our 3rd Army Corps gained some high ground south of the Aisne overlooking the Aisne Valley east of Soissons. Here a long-range artillery duel between our guns and those of the French on our left and the enemy's artillery in the hills continued during the greater part of the day and did not cease until nearly midnight. The enemy had a very large number of heavy howitzers in well-concealed positions. The movement of this army corps was effected in co-operation with that of the French 6th army on our left, which gained the southern half of the town during the night. The 2nd Army Corps did not cross the Aisne.

The 1st Army Corps got over the River Vesle to the south of the Aisne after the crossing had been secured by the 1st Cavalry Division. It then reached a line south of the Aisne practically without fighting. At Braine, the 1st Cavalry Division met with considerable opposition from infantry and machine guns holding the town and guarding the bridge. With the aid of some of our infantry it gained possession of the town about midday, driving the enemy to the north. Some hundred prisoners were captured round Braine, where the Germans had thrown a large amount of field-gun ammunition into the river, where it was visible under 2 ft. of water. On our right the French reached the line of the River Vesle.

On this day, too, the Germans were forced to evacuate Vitry-le-François, within which town they had for some time fortified themselves, and were thrown across the Seulx. On the right wing of the Allies they were attacked at Sermoin and Revigny, which places, after setting up an active opposition to the onslaught of the French, they abandoned, leaving a number of guns and much ammunition and equipment. In the Argonne, too, the enemy began to give way, retreating towards the north of the forest of Belnoue.

Fighting such as had now been going on for so many days was bound to leave its tragic mark on the countryside. The whole length of the fighting area had at the close of this, and in fact any, day, the appearance of a kingdom of death. In the ditches by the roadside, on every mound, in the fields and meadows mixed

up with the dead bodies of horses, lay the mangled corpses of the fallen—friend and enemy. Some had their arms bent as if in the last movement to defend themselves, the clenched fingers of others bore witness to the horror of their last moments, and blood and dust still further disfigured features already distorted by excitement and terror. Ammunition wagons, upset and with broken wheels, scraps of uniforms, and arms of every kind, were heaped about as far as the eye could see. Great mounds of recently dug earth, all in line, carefully raked over, and marked with wooden crosses, showed the places where the fallen heroes' comrades had found time piously to do their last duty by them.

In one village which had been the objective of a terrific artillery bombardment, through which gun and ammunition wagons had madly torn, where soldiers, horse and foot, had entered and fought hand to hand, the spectacle, when eventually the Germans had been forced out of the place, was more than ghastly. In the small country house of a notary were to be found lying side by side the most seriously wounded and the dying ; outside too, on the lawn, the wounded were there for days and nights waiting for some one to attend to them, for most of them had not even had their wounds dressed, In the dusk one had to walk through the streets with the utmost care, for fear of knocking against the wounded or treading on the dying and dead. The villages in the vicinity were often strewn with prone bodies, lying sometimes line after line in regular order as they had been struck down in their ranks by sudden, fearful Death. To proceed, one had to step over these lines in a death-like silence, broken, though, from time to time by some feeble groan which was the prelude to the reign of another absolute calm—no one could search for the source of that groan.

Sunday, the 13th, now dawned, raining everywhere heavily and determinedly, but finding the armies of the French and British eager as ever to continue the fighting. And during the whole day, along the whole length of their front, the Allies, in their efforts to push back the enemy, encountered an extremely strong resistance.

During the early part of the day the Allies pressed steadily forward. On their left wing the enemy was forced to continue his general retreat, the Allied troops eventually reaching the lower course of the Aisne. So, too, in the centre, the French, steadily pursuing the enemy, were able to force the Marne between Epernay and Vitry-le-François. On the right wing, the region around Nancy was abandoned by the Germans and the French reoccupied Lunéville. By the time the day had closed the Allies had succeeded quite brilliantly on their left wing. The enemy was

to a further advance northwards. At the same time a pontoon bridge was constructed for the use of the British who were yet on the south side of the river. By the early evening this bridge had been completed and another infantry brigade, the 10th, had crossed the river by its means and moved on against the enemy. The fight for the heights, however, was not yet concluded, though it had made great progress, notwithstanding that the enemy's artillery and machine-gun fire was very severe.

Before the close of the day all the artillery of the division, with the exception of the heavy battery of one brigade of field artillery, had crossed the river. The enemy, being forced to retire at all points, entrenched himself on the high ground two miles away to the north, but our men, determined at any cost not only to maintain the position they had gained, but to leave no stone unturned to dislodge him, strongly entrenched themselves in their turn in commanding positions, powerful artillery corps being brought up in their support.

Eight pontoon bridges and one foot-bridge had been thrown across the river, generally under very heavy artillery fire; three road bridges and a railway bridge had been temporarily repaired; and preparations were made for the repair of three other bridges that could take mechanical transport.

This day saw the completion of the reoccupation of a very large part of the territory of France which until September 8 had been overrun and occupied by the invaders. France and the world had now had an opportunity to see how the Germans had treated places and people in the course of their incursion, where little or no resistance at all had been opposed to them. Three small towns, Senlis, Crépy, Villers-Cotterets, and the cathedral city of Reims were referred to in particular by the "Eye-Witness" at the British Headquarters as follows:

At Senlis it is stated, on what appears to be good authority, that a poacher shot one German soldier and wounded another as the forces entered the town. The German Commander then assembled the Mayor of the town and five other leading citizens, and forced them to kneel before graves which had already been dug.

Requisition was made for various supplies, and the six citizens were then taken to a neighbouring field and shot. According to the corroborative evidence of several independent persons, some twenty-four people, including women and children, were also shot. The town was then pillaged, and was fired in several places before it was evacuated. It is believed that the cathedral was not damaged, but many houses were destroyed. Creil was also thoroughly pillaged and many houses were burnt.

At Crépy on September 3 various articles were requisitioned under

threat of a fine of 100,000 f. for every day's delay in the delivery of the goods. The following list shows the amounts and natures of the supplies demanded, and also the actual quantities furnished:

REQUISITIONED.	FURNISHED.
Flour, 20,000 kilos	20,000 kilos
Dried vegetables, 5,000 kilos	800 ,,
Coffee, 1,000 kilos	809 ,,
Salt, 1,000 kilos	2,000 ,,
Oats, 100,000 kilos	55,000 ,,
Red wine, 2,500 litres	2,500 litres
All smoked meats, ham, cloth, new boots, tobacco, biscuits, handkerchiefs, shirts, braces, stockings, horseshoes, bicycles, motor-cars, petrol	61 pairs of boots 91 bicycles 15 motor tyres 6 inner tubes

Immediately on arrival a proclamation was issued by the Commander of the German division. The main points were: That all arms were to be handed in at the Town Hall at once. That all civilians found with arms would be shot at once. That no person was to be in the streets after dark. That no lights were to be maintained in the houses or streets at night. That the doors of all houses were to be left open. That the inhabitants were not to collect in groups. That any obstruction of the German troops or threatening of them would be immediately punished by death. That German money was to be accepted at the rate of 1 mark for 1 f. 25 c.

At Villers-Cotterets the Mayor appears to have behaved very judiciously, and, though supplies far in excess of the capabilities of the place were demanded, the town was not seriously damaged. The Germans evacuated the place on September 11 in such haste that they left behind a large amount of the bread requisitioned. It was stated by the inhabitants that the enemy destroyed and abandoned fifteen motor-lorries, seven guns, and ammunition wagons.

Reims was occupied by the enemy on September 3. It was reoccupied by the French after considerable fighting on the 13th. On the 12th a proclamation, a copy of which is in possession of the British army, was posted all over the town. A literal translation of this poster is given below:

PROCLAMATION

In the event of an action being fought either to-day or in the immediate future in the neighbourhood of Reims, or in the town itself, the inhabitants are warned that they must remain absolutely calm and must in no way try to take part in the fighting. They must not attempt to attack either isolated soldiers or detachments of the German army. The erection of barricades, the taking up of paving-stones in the streets in a way to hinder the movements of the troops, or, in a word, any action that may embarrass the German army, is formally forbidden.

With a view to securing adequately the safety of the troops and to instil

calm into the population of Reims the persons named below have been seized as hostages by the Commander-in-Chief of the German army. These hostages will be hanged at the slightest attempt at disorder. Also the town will be totally or partly burnt and the inhabitants will be hanged for any infraction of the above.

By order of the German authorities,

THE MAYOR (Dr. Langlet).

Reims, September 12, 1914.

Here follow the names of eighty-one of the principal inhabitants of Reims with their addresses, including four priests, ending with the words "and some others."

The above account, being of a somewhat official character, seems to have erred on the side of extreme moderation of statement. When, later on, these towns were visited and made the subject of careful investigation, it was discovered that the conduct of the German invaders had been very much worse than the official report indicated. Let Senlis be an example. The occupation of this town was preceded by a terrific bombardment and completed by an onslaught of an immense number of German soldiers, and this notwithstanding the fact that at that time the place had been completely evacuated by the retreating Allies. The cathedral was severely damaged by shells, its spire narrowly escaping complete destruction. A number of public buildings were also struck by shells. The Germans, who behaved like maddened beasts, broke into the houses, brutally driving out all the inhabitants who remained, and making them march before them. Of these many were shot, including old men, women, and children. Having thus gratified their lust for blood, the Germans set fire to the houses on both sides of the Rue de la République, the principal street of the town, with such effect that the buildings of the Sub-Prefecture, the Court-Houses, the Treasury Offices, and all the private houses on the left with the exception of four, and those on the right with the exception of fifteen, were reduced to smouldering ruin. Other streets were almost entirely burnt down. The unfortunate Mayor was done to death most brutally. Two soldiers only were detailed for his execution, and after they had fired, it being discovered that he was not mortally wounded, another stepped up to him and killed him by firing a bullet through his head with a revolver. He was then buried in his own garden.

Reims suffered terribly—it is not yet time, however, to tell the tale of Reims, as more injury was yet to be suffered by this unfortunate city.

On Monday the 14th, the enemy settled down to a vigorous defensive, and Sir John French was able to pass a strong reinforcement of our troops to the north of the river in support of those that had already crossed on the previous day. These reinforcements crossed by ferry, by pontoon bridges, and by the remains of the permanent bridges, but did so in the face, not only of a vigorous and continuous fire by the enemy, but also notwithstanding the heavy rain and the consequent state of the roads and ground, which necessarily made their movements very slow. At places the two armies got into very close contact; the 1st Army Corps, having to deal with repeated attacks by the Germans, was successful in repelling these and captured 600 prisoners and 12 guns. The cavalry also took a number of prisoners. By the close of the day it appeared that the light forces on our left wing had come into contact throughout with the German rearguard. The result of the day's operations was that the enemy who had settled down into a line of defence between Compiègne and Soissons had been forced to abandon it, and a detachment which he had brought down from Amiens had found it necessary to retire upon Péronne and St. Quentin. In the centre the enemy organised a defensive position to the north and to the north-west of Reims, but he found it very difficult to maintain it in face of the persistent advance of the French. Between the Argonne and the Meuse he continued steadily to fall back. On the right wing the French were successful in occupying the fortress of Troyon, which had been taken and retaken a number of times by either side during the last few days. From Nancy to the Vosges Mountains the Germans were pressed back in general retreat so successfully that by the close of the day the French territory had been entirely cleared of them in this neighbourhood.

On the 15th little progress was made by the Allies. It had now become more and more evident that the defensive preparations made by the enemy were more extensive than was at first apparent. In order to counter these, measures were taken by the British Commander-in-Chief to economise our troops and to secure protection from the hostile artillery fire, which was very fierce, and our men attacked the enemy continuously and never rested in their work of digging and strengthening their entrenchments. The Germans replied by bombarding our lines nearly all the day, using heavy guns, some brought, no doubt, from before Maubeuge, in addition to those with the corps, and by attempting to rush our trenches. All their counter-attacks, however, failed, although in some places they were repeated six times; one made on the 4th Guards Brigade was repulsed

with heavy slaughter. An attempt to advance slightly, made by part of our line, was unsuccessful as regards gaining ground, but led to withdrawal of part of the enemy's infantry and artillery. Further counter-attacks made during the night were beaten off. Rain came on towards evening and continued intermittently until 9 a.m. on the 16th. Besides adding to the discomfort of the soldiers, holding open trenches in the firing line, the wet weather to some extent hampered the motor-transport service, which was also hindered by the broken bridges.

Fighting of this lively character continued the whole length of the line, the task of the Allies being made the more difficult by reason of the fact that a great part of the enemy's lines had been very strongly organised by him.

On the 16th there was little change in the position occupied by the British forces. Though the enemy was in general less active, yet he maintained a heavy bombardment through the morning and the evening. Conditions were very much the same the whole length of the front.

On the 17th there was again no change in the situation in its essentials; all that can be said is that the Allies made some slow progress in a battle which was waged right along the front, which extended from the Oise to the Meuse, the Germans occupying well-organised defensive positions and having armies of heavy artillery which throughout the whole time were doing deadly work. The fight was frequently at very close quarters and of the most desperate nature. One village in the area of the French operations had already been captured and recaptured twice by each side. Its streets were filled eventually with the dead of both sides. The Germans had proved themselves to be a formidable enemy: their soldiers were well trained, long prepared, and brave, carrying on the contest with skill and valour; they fought, however, with the idea of winning under any circumstances, regardless of all the rules of fair-play. The Allies in their turn—both British and French—were animated with a vigorous offensive spirit—but a spirit which was quite consistent with more regard than had the enemy for the rules of warfare. It can be taken that the Germans found in them at least their match. As an example of the spirit which was inspiring the French, the following translation of the Ordre du Jour published on September 9, after the battle of Montmirail, by the Commander of the French 5th army, is given.

SOLDIERS!

Upon the memorable fields of Montmirail, of Vauchamps, or Champaubert, which a century ago witnessed the victories of our ancestors over

Blücher's Prussians, your vigorous offensive has triumphed over the resistance of the Germans. Held on his flanks, his centre broken, the enemy is now retreating towards east and north by forced marches. The most renowned army corps of Old Prussia, the contingents of Westphalia, of Hanover, of Brandenburg, have retired in haste before you.

This first success is no more than a prelude. The enemy is shaken, but not decisively beaten.

You have still to undergo severe hardships, to make long marches, to fight hard battles.

May the image of our country, soiled by barbarians, always remain before your eyes. Never was it more necessary to sacrifice all for her.

Saluting the heroes who have fallen in the fighting of the last few days, my thoughts turn towards you—the victors in the next battle.

Forward, soldiers, for France!

MONTMIRAIL, *September* 9, 1914.

General Commanding the 5th Army,
FRANCHET D'ESPEREY.

In order to convey some idea of the nature of the fighting the following account by "Eye-Witness" is of great interest:

It may be said that along the greater part of our front the Germans have been driven back from the forward slopes on the north of the river. Their infantry are holding strong lines of trenches amongst and along the edges of the numerous woods which crown these slopes. These trenches are elaborately constructed and cleverly concealed.

In many places there are wire entanglements and lengths of rabbit fencing both in the woods and in the open, carefully aligned so that they can be swept by rifle fire and machine guns, which are invisible from our side of the valley. The ground in front of the infantry trenches is also as a rule under cross-fire from field artillery placed on neighbouring features and under high-angle fire from pieces placed well back behind woods on top of the plateau.

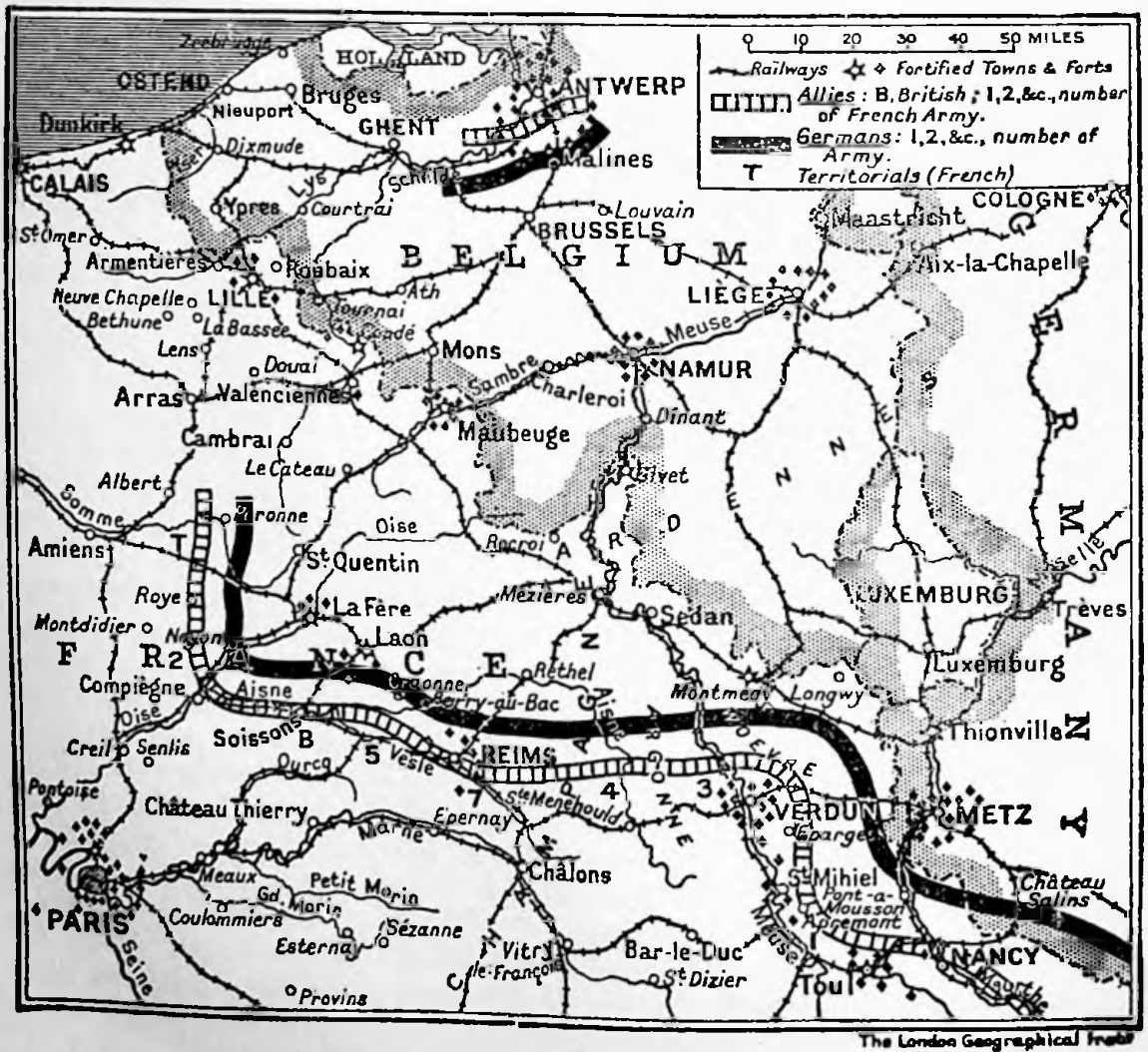
A feature of this action, as of the previous fights, is the use made by the enemy of their numerous heavy howitzers, with which they are able to direct a long-range fire all over the valley and right across it. Upon these they evidently place great reliance. Where our men are holding the forward edges of the high ground on the north side they are now strongly entrenched. They are well fed, and in spite of the wet weather of the past week are cheerful and confident. The bombardment by both sides has been very heavy, and on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday was practically continuous. Nevertheless, in spite of the general din caused by the reports of the immense number of heavy guns in action along our front on Wednesday, the arrival of a French force acting against the German right flank was at once announced on the east of our front, some miles away, by the continuous roar of their quick-firing artillery with which their attack was opened.

So far as the British are concerned the greater part of this week has been passed in bombardment, in gaining ground by degrees, and in beating back severe counter-attacks with heavy slaughter. Our casualties have been severe, but it is probable that those of the enemy are heavier. The rain has caused a great drop in temperature and there is more than a distinct feeling of autumn in the air, especially in the early mornings.

The 18th was another day of little progress.

On the 19th the net effect of the day's operations was very slight. The retreat of the Germans certainly continued as hitherto right along their line. It was some satisfaction, however, to the Allies to find that in this general retreat the Crown Prince of Germany was distinguishing himself by taking a leading place in it, in advance.

The day, however, was, in another respect, one of considerable importance, for General Joffre developed a new plan and decided



The London Geographical Institute

POSITION OF THE ARMIES ON SEPTEMBER 21.

to attack and envelop the German right wing. This meant a particular responsibility being once more thrown upon the British forces and the French in their neighbourhood. Moreover, it involved the Allies remaining content with the continuation of the unsatisfactory fighting which had been carried on during the past week, for some few days longer, for not until then, even if the greatest success should be achieved, could the effect of the new flank movement be felt and a way opened to drive the enemy from his positions. So Sir John French forthwith established a system of regular relief in the trenches, using the infantry of the 6th Division for that purpose with good results. He also formed a general reserve of considerable strength, which he brought back alternately south of the river, and of the artillery of this division. The cavalry had been doing, and continued to do, remarkably fine work in the trenches, lightening very considerably the arduous and trying task which had of necessity fallen to the lot of the infantry during this and the preceding day. Two German aeroplanes were brought down by the British anti-aircraft guns and one of our airmen succeeded in dropping several bombs over the German lines, an incendiary bomb falling with great effect on a transport car.

The three following days from the 20th to the 22nd were again days of little progress. There was, however, much and very deadly fighting, and there were many attacks and counter-attacks on the opposing trenches; artillery was playing a great part on each side. The enemy was particularly active in bombardment, his object being, when nothing more definite or practical was possible, to endeavour to break down the resistance of the Allies by concentrated and prolonged firing and to shatter their nerves with high explosives before an infantry attack was launched. The day came when the Germans discovered that such an attempt as this on men of the calibre of the soldiers of the Allies was not only absolutely futile, but altogether absurd. Under such circumstances it is obvious that the Allies must have suffered considerable losses, though they had the satisfaction of discovering that the number of the enemy's killed and wounded vastly exceeded their own.

The three days the 23rd, 24th, and 25th were days mainly of preliminary effort towards the great struggle which was to commence on the 26th and of which the Allies' left wing and their centre were to be the main scenes. The first move was the very considerable development of General de Castelnau's army on the extreme left. The enemy, apparently learning of this new disposition of the Allied forces, very smartly replied by placing a

great army in the region of Tergnier and St. Quentin. This army of Germans was brought up from the centre of the enemy line, from Lorraine, and the Vosges. Those men who came from the latter places were conveyed by railroad to Cambrai by Liége and Valenciennes. The Allies obtained more and heavier guns.

For some time the Allied Commanders had discovered that in great battles which lasted for several days, as those which had been their experience during this month, it was necessary to employ heavy guns of a larger calibre than were usual. The fact that the Germans had brought into action guns of a size which appear to have been hitherto unknown in field warfare would alone account for this, and so the French as well as the English had already made arrangements to bring heavier guns into the field. Sir John French had sent to England for four 6-in. howitzer batteries; these arrived on the 23rd, two being handed over to the 2nd Corps and two to the 1st, and were brought into action on the 24th with very good results.

The two armies having thus reorganised their forces so that each had an immense number of men concentrated on the west and at the centre of the Allies' line, and their artillery having been strengthened to an enormous extent, the battle recommenced on the 26th with a constant and vigorous bombardment by each side, the establishment of new trenches, a widespread attempt at "sapping" up to the opposite trenches by either side, and persistent attacks and counter-attacks of the men upon each other's positions.

But before the 26th, during the three days just referred to, the left wing had been able to make some progress, particularly in the region of Lassigny, between the Somme and the Oise. The Allies had progressed in the direction of Roye, and on the 24th they occupied Péronne, in which place they maintained their position in spite of the lively attacks of the enemy. To the north-west of Berry-au-Bac there was also a slight advance on the part of the French too. Between the Oise and the Aisne, the enemy continued to maintain his position, being there represented by considerable forces which were very firmly entrenched. In the centre of the Allied line there was no marked modification of position. On the 23rd between Reims and the Meuse there was much fighting, however. In the Woëvre, to the north-east of Verdun, and in the direction of Mouilly and Dompièrre, the enemy attempted with almost desperate effort to throw back the French. He was, however, repulsed and was equally unsuccessful in smaller efforts which he made to the south of the Woëvre. On

This document is a translation and facsimile of signatures from the original treaty of 1831 guaranteeing the independence and neutrality of Belgium, which was confirmed by the six Powers in the famous treaty of 1839, the breaking of which by Germany is responsible for the present war with the British Empire.

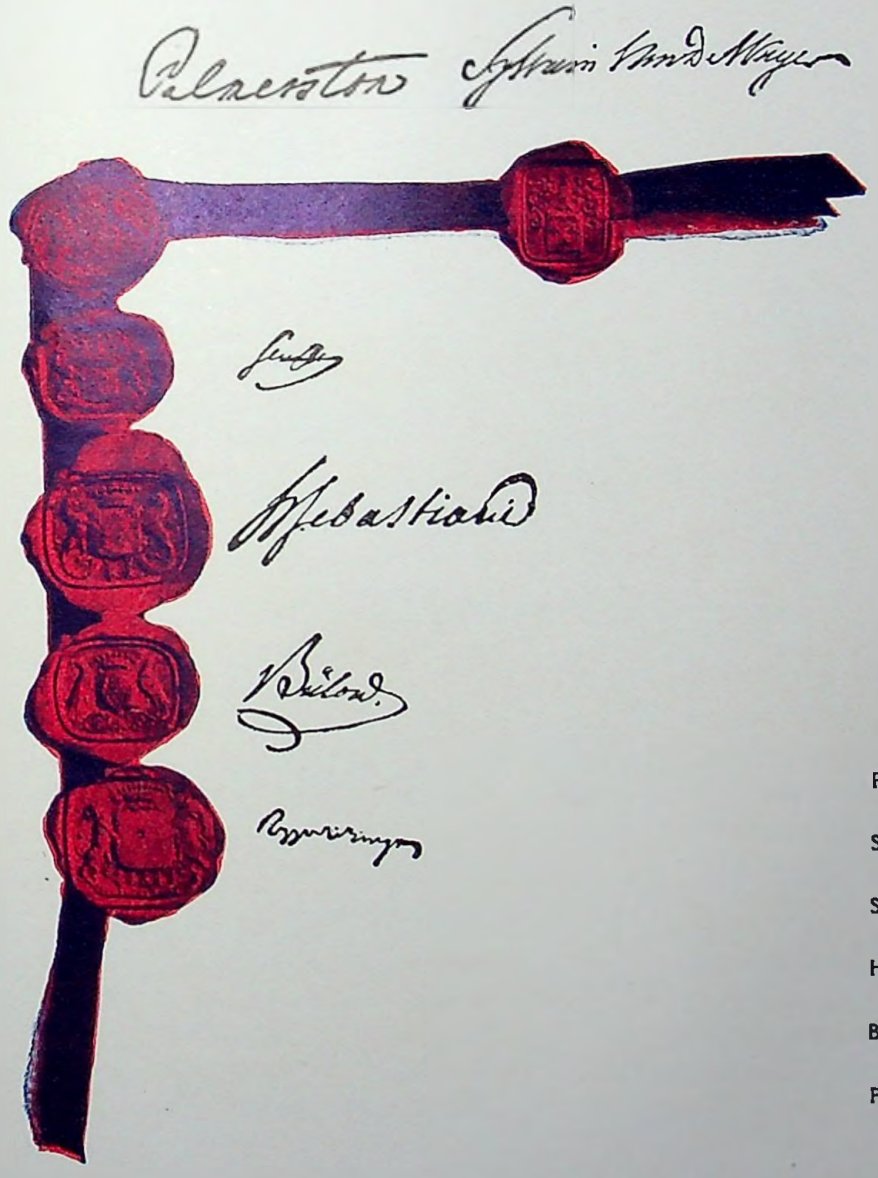
The "Scrap of Paper"

ARTICLE II.

Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary and Bohemia, His Majesty the King of the French, His Majesty the King of Prussia, and His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, declare, that the Articles mentioned in the preceding Article, are considered as having the same force and validity as if they were textually inserted in the present Act, and that they are thus placed under the guarantee of their said Majesties.

ARTICLE VII.

Belgium, within the limits specified in Articles I., II., and IV. shall form an independent and perpetually neutral State. It shall be bound to observe such neutrality towards all other States.



PALMERSTON
British Plenipotentiary

SYLVAN VAN DE WEYER
Belgian Plenipotentiary

SENFFT
Austrian Plenipotentiary

H. SEBASTIANI
French Plenipotentiary

BÜLOW
Prussian Plenipotentiary

POZZO DI BORGO
Russian Plenipotentiary

the 24th there was no change of position between Reims and the Argonne, and though the fighting was continuous there, and to the east of the Argonne and upon the heights of the Meuse, neither side made any advance, although during the day there had been frequent incidental alternations of success. On the 25th the French progressed to the east of Reims towards Berru-Moronvilliers. Upon the right bank of the Meuse the enemy were so far successful as to be able to attain the heights of the Meuse in the region of the promontory of Hattonchâtel, pushing forward in the direction of Saint Mihiel. In the course of this operation there was a violent cannonading on the forts of Paroches and Camp des Romains. To the south of Verdun, however, the French remained masters of the heights of the Meuse, and proceeding from the direction of Toul their troops were able to advance as far as the region of Beaumont. On the right wing of the Allies in the region of Lorraine and the Vosges, notwithstanding continuous attacks and counter-attacks, no progress was made by either side during these three days.

There is no doubt that during the last week or so the German armies were badly led by officers who were either inefficient, reckless, or negligent, and were handicapped by confused and unsatisfactory organisation. Having regard to the great number of men at the command of the enemy and to his overwhelming preponderance in artillery, no other explanation of the non-success of the invaders is possible. He had everything material in his favour, including—what was of the highest importance—the nature of the country over which he had been fighting. As a consequence of this inefficient leadership and organisation, the soldiers themselves lost confidence and heart. On the other hand the armies of the Allies were inspired with a remarkable spirit. The ruthless methods of the Germans in their advance into France, as evidenced by the needless bloodshed, and the criminal pillage and rapine of which they were guilty, must themselves have reacted upon the character of the men and tended to transform disciplined soldiery into a horde of irresponsible, reckless, and savage ruffians. A diary found on an officer of the 178th German Infantry Regiment, which was published by the Press Bureau, is some confirmation of the justice of this view :

August 9.—We are still without any orders to move. . . . One of the brigade staff officers came out in the evening and was astonished to find us still here. Our orders must have been lost. . . .

August 15.—I had a look at the little château belonging to one of the King's secretaries (not at home). Our men had behaved like regular vandals. They had looted the cellar first, and then had turned their

attention to the bedrooms, and thrown things about all over the place. They had even made fruitless efforts to smash the safe open. Everything was topsy-turvy — magnificent furniture, silk, and even china — things that happen when the men are allowed to requisition for themselves. . . . I am sure they must have taken away a heap of useless stuff simply for the pleasure of looting. . . .

August 18.—Late in the evening the train arrived (about fifty vehicles). They had come from Gouvy after doing 60 kilometres, probably the result of a mistake in reading an order. . . .

August 23. . . . A spy was caught and shot. We marched to Lisogne, but after passing Dorinne the column went astray; we had to return on our tracks. . . . Our men came back and said . . . we could not get on any farther as the villagers were shooting at us from every house. We shot the whole lot, sixteen of them. They were drawn up in three ranks; the same shot did for three at a time. Two 6-in. howitzers succeeded in getting into position, and in twenty shots reduced the village of Bouvines to ruins. The men were absolutely mad at this sneaking way of fighting. They wanted to burn everything, and they succeeded, too, in setting light to several houses. In the afternoon our artillery fairly sprinkled the principal building in the place the whole length of the village with incendiary shells. It was a marvellous sight, the high ground from Dinant to Leppe overlooking the Meuse, all in flames. The division crossed the Meuse; you never saw such disorder. . . .

August 26. . . . We came to Villers-en-Pagne. . . . The enemy's guns opened on us and killed and wounded quite a few. So in the evening we set fire to the village; the priest and some of the inhabitants were shot. We passed through Pettigny and Couvin. Couvin had been partially looted. . . . The villages all round were burning. . . . The inhabitants fired on our men again. The division took drastic steps to stop the villages being burnt and the inhabitants shot. The pretty little village of Gué d'Ossus was apparently set on fire without cause. . . . At Leppe apparently 200 men were shot. There must have been some innocent men among them. . . .

August 29. . . . The other side of Dommery we came on a wood where a hellish fire stopped us. . . . There was a panic; everybody gave orders and nobody thought of telling us to lie down. . . . There was a shocking mess, shots in every direction. I wouldn't live through those moments again for worlds. At last the captain managed to get a few men together to form a firing-line. We were being shot at by friend and foe. It was a grave error on the part of the Staff to start the regiment on a night march after three tiring days. After the fight the night before one might have foreseen that the enemy would take up a strong position and try to surprise us. It was dawn before we could resume our march. Suddenly firing began again. . . . We got on to some high ground about 1,000 metres from Launois, when our own artillery opened fire on us. Some shells burst only forty metres away from us; it wasn't a bit nice. . . . Our machine-gun company suffered heavily from our own shells, unfortunately. Several officers were wounded. Suddenly we came up against the enemy's artillery,

which was in a position on a flank. The men fell back. . . . The whole of Launois was in flames. . . .

September 3.—Still at Rethel, on guard over prisoners. The houses are charming inside. The middle class in France has magnificent furniture. We found stylish pieces everywhere, and beautiful silk, but in what a state! . . . Every bit of furniture broken, mirrors smashed. The Vandals themselves could not have done more damage. This place is a disgrace to our army. . . . The column Commanders are responsible for the greater part of the damage, as they could have prevented the looting and destruction. The damage amounts to millions of marks; even the safes have been attacked. In a solicitor's house in which, as luck would have it, everything was in excellent taste, including a collection of old lace and Eastern works of art, everything was smashed to bits. I couldn't resist taking a little memento myself . . . a splendid aquascutum and a camera for Felix.

September 9.—We marched to Œuvry. The enemy was apparently 2 kilometres in front of us. Where was our intelligence branch? Our artillery arrived half an hour too late, unfortunately. . . .

September 15.—We marched to Pont Givart, Ville-aux-Bois. After marching till we were all absolutely done and our feet knocked to bits, we were sent into the fight again. And they call us reserve troops! . . . After a murderous fight we entrenched at Ville-aux-Bois.

September 16. . . . Our last officer fell, shot through the head. . . .

September 18.—The air is absolutely poisoned. . . . Wounded men keep coming in. In the evening the enemy made another attack, which was beaten off. . . .

September 22.—Troops of the 18th Corps passed all day. Apparently they are to come up on the right wing. Their infantry has lost as heavily as ours. God knows what the idea of this reinforcement is! I am convinced that this country will give us all a grave. The 105th Regiment has had a furious fight with the English. . . .

The three days from the 26th to the 28th were the period in which the enemy made his one last great effort in this battle to establish his ascendancy. During the night of the 27th and 28th he made a most determined attempt to capture the trenches of the 1st Division of Sir John French's army, but without the slightest success. Everywhere along the line, whether operating against the British or against the French, save for the very important exception of the region of St. Mihiel in the centre, he was not only unsuccessful, but suffered very heavy loss. The artillery of the Allies successfully resisted him, with that exception, throughout. He lost a flag, and many cannon, and hosts of prisoners were taken by the Allies. Between the Oise and Reims our front was the object of very violent German attacks at many points, resulting, however, everywhere in summary and deadly check at the point of the bayonet—in many places the opposing trenches would be as near to one another as about 100

yards. Fighting with results of a similar character also took place to the north of the Somme and between the Somme and the Oise. On the 27th the Prussian Guards engaged in a vigorous offensive along the line from Reims to Souain, but were thrown back into the region of Berru and Nogent-l'Abbesse. By this time these Guards—the world-famed unit—had been so badly damaged that thenceforth their reputation was shattered.

Now, by means of a fierce lunge forward, after many previous unsuccessful attempts, the Germans, strongly reinforced with about four army corps—forming the *détachement d'armée* of General von Strantz—were at length, thanks to an exceptionally powerful siege artillery, so successful as to be able to drive in the French line between Pont-à-Mousson and Fresnes, to reduce the fort at Camp des Romains, cross the Meuse at St. Mihiel, occupy that town, and push forward as far as the valley of the Aire. This offensive stroke formed part of the bold conception of breaking through the centre and simultaneously driving in the French, not only to the south of Verdun, but also to the west in the Argonne, and thus surround the fortress which is the very pivot of the French line. The second step, if it had not been prevented, might possibly have involved the French campaign in disaster. Though the Germans gained the crossing they could not carry the heights beyond. Their repeated assaults resulted in terrible losses, while the French guns blew to pieces all attempts to cross the river, either above or below St. Mihiel. Nor were the French more successful in the counter-attack, and both combatants were brought to a virtual standstill. There is no doubt as to the importance which the Germans attached to the possession of this wedge. They had now acquired an opportunity to build a light railway to St. Mihiel from Thiaucourt, which was itself connected by rail with Metz, and so to move up men and munitions to any threatened point without delay. This success was mainly due, as already stated, to their artillery, and it is an interesting fact that in this operation those heavy guns were used which had been brought for the sole purpose of reducing Paris.

On the right wing of the Allies, no change in position was effected whatsoever, during these days. The main efforts of the enemy had been directed against the centre and the Allies' left wing, with the object of breaking through the former, turning the latter, and preventing the Allies reaching the sea. By the last day of September the operations had so developed that they were concentrated almost entirely, on the side of the Allies, in an effort to extend their front northwards, the Germans contenting themselves with endeavours to arrest the extension of our line to the

sea, and maintaining the advantage they had acquired in the centre.

During all this fighting it goes without saying that much damage must have been done to the towns and places within the area of which it was the scene. Of all places which suffered, probably Reims suffered most. When, during the earlier stages of the battle, the Germans were driven out of the city and the French occupied it and the country to the north as far as Berry-au-Bac, the Germans appeared to have followed a course largely prompted in its detail by motives of revenge; on no other ground is it possible to understand their bombardment of the city, their partial destruction of the cathedral. And the revenge, too, would seem almost to have been premeditated. In the event of the Germans receiving a check, a German journal, the *Berliner Blatt*, wrote on September 5: "The western group of our armies in France has already passed the second line of the French forts excepting Reims, whose royal, antique splendour, contemporaneous with the white lilies, will be soon reduced to powder *by our artillery*." The tale of Reims, however, will be told in the next chapter.

As a fact, neither the plan of the Allies nor the plan of the Germans was crowned with success on the Aisne. The opposing armies, by some unexpected overpowering circumstance of war, were planted upon the ground, which they had already mined and trenched, like two powerful athletes who, having seized one another in equal clutch, are motionless except for the contraction of their muscles and the movements of their features, which reveal to the onlookers the implacable intensity of their efforts. This state of affairs was most apparent on and after September 30, for each combatant now found that progress was impossible on the front already in existence: an attack here and there, a little lost and a little gained after perhaps a superhuman effort, might be the most that could be hoped for.

The Germans reached Reims on September 4th; they found it already evacuated by the French, and under no circumstances whatever could an invader have been allowed to occupy a city with less opposition than the Germans were allowed by the French to occupy Reims. The forts were absolutely out of date, having been constructed shortly after the war of 1870–71; they were little more than mere earthworks. The French knew that if they opposed the entry of the invader the city would be exposed to unnecessary damage from the powerful and deadly artillery of the Germans, so the French evacuated the town, having first entirely dismantled and abandoned the forts.

CHAPTER XIII

THE TRAGEDY OF REIMS

Lunéville—The burning of Cerceuil—Nancy—First enemy attack repulsed—Kaiser present—Second and final repulse—The German occupation of Lille—How they extorted money and goods from the city—The Préfet narrowly escapes execution—Amiens—Arrangements made for the entry of the enemy—German courtesy, but extravagant demands—Hostages—Peaceable occupation and quiet departure—Reims—a different tale—Its historic cathedral—The church of St. Remy—The strategic importance of Reims—The city evacuated by the French—Germans bombard and enter—September 4 to 12—At first no outrage during this period—The Germans begin to retreat through the city—Their unrestrained conduct—Fear of a rising of the people—Proclamation—Letter of a German soldier—French retake city—Germans retire to hills outside—French establish themselves opposite—The two armies bombard one another—Unfortunately city between—Bombardment continued for more than a fortnight from September 14—The searchlights on the cathedral—Agreement between German and French commanders not to bombard cathedral—Breach of agreement by Germans—September 19 cathedral shelled and in flames—Cathedral in use as a hospital—German wounded there—Many killed—Clergy attempt their rescue—Other damage done—Church of St. Remy—Civil hospital bombarded—Patients and attendants killed—The scenes in the city—September 28—Renewal of bombardment—Report of American architect—October 19—Germans dislodged from the hills.

THE outstanding features in the operations of the month of September, as regards particular incidents, were the bombardment of Nancy and Lunéville and the evacuation by the enemy of Lille, Amiens, and Reims, cities which the Germans had occupied in the course of their original triumphant march towards Paris.

The town of Lunéville was bombarded by the Germans towards the end of August, and subsequently, after a sanguinary combat with the French, the enemy was able to occupy the town. One can imagine the vigour of the struggle on this occasion when one learns that the losses of the enemy were estimated at 11,000 men, bodies of the German dead being piled up two yards high. The town was nothing but a charnel-house. The French losses were considerable, but infinitely less than those of the Germans. Later, in the early part of September, Lunéville was retaken by the French after a bombardment had compelled the Germans to evacuate. The result of these two operations was that the town suffered so greatly that very little of it remained intact.

The first attack upon Nancy took place on Friday, September 1. The enemy prefaced their assault by burning several of the villages

in the neighbourhood, one of which, Cerceuil, being the tragic scene of a conflagration so mighty that the flames were easily visible over a radius of many miles. The village was thus reduced to cinders. On the 6th the enemy made a desperate onslaught on Nancy, the heavy enemy batteries, with their deadly fire of shell, doing their best to assist the German troops to seize the town. The attack, however, failed, the French artillery being more than a match for that of the Germans, and it was with the greatest difficulty that even a remnant of the German soldiery engaged in the attempt to occupy the town could regain the enemy lines. On the following day, a second and more desperate attack was made by the Germans, on this occasion the Kaiser himself being present, not only to encourage his army, but in order to have the glory of entering the city as its conqueror. He was doomed to disappointment. Though the bombardment continued for two days, the whole of the time, day and night without cessation, and though at least 20,000 Germans lost their lives, yet again did the French successfully repel the enemy. On the 10th and 11th the Germans renewed the bombardment; but yet again, though they inflicted considerable loss of life and much damage to property, they were unsuccessful and were forced to retire for a considerable distance. The net result of the operation was that the French had gained a substantial advantage.

At Lille and Amiens there is not, happily, the same tale of bloodshed and destruction to tell.

The Germans entered Lille on August 21. As the result of a careful deliberation of the French military authorities with the civic rulers, it had been decided that in view of the strength of the enemy, the town should be evacuated. So, on the 21st, Lille was ready for the German occupation. It commenced with the advent of a German Lieutenant in a motor-car accompanied by a few foot-soldiers. The officer called upon the Mayor, and, accompanied by his men, with fixed bayonets, announced that the Germans were now in full occupation of the town and would soon be represented there by three divisions of the army. Two days passed without this great body of soldiery appearing on the scene; but on the 9th about 15,000 German soldiers appeared. Then the officer in command, accompanied by a German civil functionary, paid another visit to the Mayor and forced him to hand over the city cash; much to the disgust of the Germans, this amounted to the sum of only about £1,000. The following day a superior officer arrived and took over the command of the German forces and at once got into touch with the aforesaid functionary. On being informed of the low state of the civic

balance he announced, on the suggestion of his civilian colleague, that he would soon find a means of getting what money he wanted. He commenced by fining a local newspaper the sum of £6,000 as a punishment for having referred to the German army as "an invading flood," informing the unfortunate editor that if the money was not forthcoming at once, the fine would be increased to £10,000; the £6,000 was paid. At the Prefecture the Lieutenant who had first entered the town was, now that he was reinforced, beginning to deal with the civic officials in true German fashion. Because there was some difficulty in obtaining what money and commodities he required, he ordered the Préfet to be executed. This order would undoubtedly have been carried out had not a French professor of German in the University at Lille had the ready wit to intimate to the irate and overbearing officer that, as an official of high importance, the Préfet was entitled to be addressed with deep respect as "his Excellency." The effect of this information upon the mind of a German, trained to unreasoning regard for titles, was just what might have been expected. He was so overcome by the information that he countermanded the order, and thus the fortunate Préfet escaped with his life. Quite suddenly, on Saturday, September 6, after a short and not very eventful occupation the enemy left the town without having committed any outrages whatever.

Amiens fell into the hands of the enemy on August 31 after many days of fighting on the outskirts, culminating in a battle at Moreuil, where the German success rendered the capture of Amiens a matter of course. Some idea of the ferocity of the fighting at Moreuil may be found in the statement of one of the enemy's soldiers that in that struggle "we had to use our last shell."

During the day of August 30, all through the night and during the early part of the 31st, crowds of refugees were flocking panic-stricken into Amiens from the surrounding villages. This was the first intimation that the authorities of the town had that the Germans were at their gates. Their entry, which commenced at 11 o'clock in the morning, was very similar to the entry of the enemy into Brussels, except that it was on a much smaller scale. It was preceded by arrangements which were concluded between the enemy and the Mayor. Accompanied by the Mayor, the German officer proceeded to the Town Hall, and outside, surrounded by his soldiery singing the eternal "Watch on the Rhine" and "Germany over all," he proclaimed in formal fashion the German occupation. He then took possession of the Town Hall, hoisted the German flag, and invited the Mayor and the principal

A STREET IN LILLE.

Photograph taken shortly after one of the battles in the manufacturing town of Lille, engagements which were desperate in their intensity. The Germans occupied the town on August 21, and for months it became the object of bombardment and attack by the French in their endeavour to drive them out.

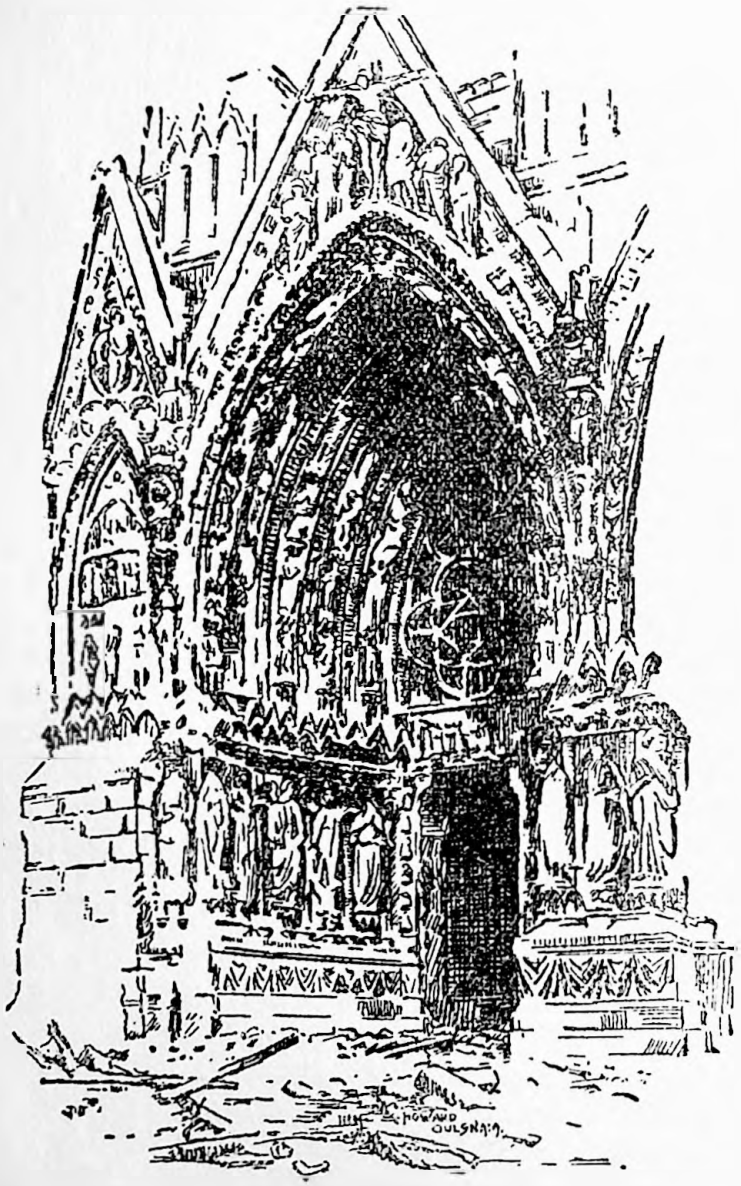
citizens to meet the German Commander-in-Chief. Much to the surprise of these worthy people the Commander spoke and acted with every courtesy, though he did not fail to make very extravagant demands. He required the town to pay at once a fine of about £40,000, partly in cash and partly in goods, threatening a bombardment if this demand should not be satisfied. Only a few hours of grace were given. It was then discovered that the requisition was of so formidable a character that it would take some days to satisfy it, and the Mayor accordingly asked for an extension of time. A respite of twelve hours was given, but the Mayor and twelve civic dignitaries were retained as hostages. On the following morning, of the cash demanded, about £6,000 was paid, but of the goods requisitioned a quantity to the value of about £34,000 was not yet ready. Provisions of all kinds, brandy, wines, cigars, petrol, electric pocket-torches and so forth, were amongst the articles which the enemy had required, and it was not until some considerable time had elapsed, during which time the hostages had been sent away to Clairemont, the neighbouring German camp, that the town managed to get these goods together. Even then the torches could not be supplied, and the Germans had to be content with 20,000 frs. in their stead. The hostages were then released.

After a few more days' occupation the German army, on September 11, departed from the town as quietly and unexpectedly as it had arrived. No damage whatever had been done to any of the public buildings or to the property of the town or citizens, and no outrages had been inflicted on the people. As a fact the conduct of the enemy, officers and men, was quiet, orderly, and even irreproachable.

Reims, unfortunately, had a very different tale to tell.

The city of Reims is one of the oldest, most venerable, and best known in France, is the centre of the Champagne, and celebrated throughout the world for the wine of that name. It has, however, a fame yet more distinguished, which it has enjoyed for many centuries throughout Western civilisation, if not, even, throughout the world. It is the ancient royal city of France which, as much almost as Paris, represents the glories of French history. It is, too, the city of a magnificent cathedral almost unique in its perfect antique Gothic beauty. The cathedral at Reims ranks hardly second to the best mediæval architectural monuments of the world. The coronation of the French Kings from the time of Philip Augustus in 1179 to Charles X in 1825, with the exception of Henry IV who was crowned at Chartres, and Napoleon who was crowned at Paris, and Louis XVIII who was not crowned at all,

all took place in this cathedral. There is also in the city, amongst other architectural treasures, the beautiful and venerable church of St. Remy in which was preserved the holy oil used in the consecration of the French Kings. Reims is therefore associated more



RUINED DOORWAY OF REIMS CATHEDRAL.

closely perhaps than any other city of France with her national history. In 1814 the city was the scene of some hard fighting between the French and the Russians, the latter, without doing damage to city or cathedral, taking possession on March 12, only, however, to be driven out by Napoleon on the following day. It

was now, a century afterwards, to experience an intimate association with the more horrible incidents of war ; it was to find itself the mark of the artillery of the ruthless " kultured " German.

On September 3 the Germans were advancing directly upon the city. It was the key to the Allied position, the roads and railways converging upon the city making it an advanced base of the first importance. Its possession meant the command of all the country between the Aisne and the Marne, implying also the command of the communications. From Roman times, even, the military importance of this city had been recognised. Eight great roads converge into it from as many points of the compass. These are military roads made originally by the Romans, mostly as straight as arrows, and were now supplemented by railways. If there was one position where it might have been expected that the French would make a stand between Belgium and Paris, it was assuredly here.

So the Germans, advancing that way upon Reims, were anticipating a bitter struggle before they could hope to occupy the city. As a fact, there was no ground for such an anticipation. Not only was it now an essential part of the plan of the Allies that retreat should as much as possible be their procedure, but, what was perhaps of yet greater importance, the fortifications of the city were practically valueless. Constructed as they had been some forty years ago, they were bound to be an easy prey for the up-to-date siege artillery of the enemy. It would therefore have been not only unwise but even criminal if the French had subjected, by a hopeless resistance, the city and inhabitants of Reims to a bombardment which would inevitably cause terrific loss of life and destruction of property. The French had accordingly dismantled and put out of action the forts and evacuated the city, so that the enemy might take possession under circumstances which would give no excuse for destruction and death.

On September 4, after a slight bombardment the Germans entered the city. During this bombardment four shells fell upon the cathedral, one on the north transept ; but little damage was done. The Germans themselves declared that this was either a mistake or caused by some corps which had not been given precedence in entering the city. Having thus taken possession the enemy remained in Reims until the 12th, when he retired to the adjacent heights. During the first few days of this period no extraordinary misconduct can be alleged against him. As a fact the Germans were too busy fighting to the south and using every effort to stay the advance which the Allies were now making against them. So Reims, instead of being the subject of deliberate

outrage at the hands of the enemy, was rather the scene of the results of his misfortunes during his retreat from the south.

On September 7 German wounded began to be brought into the city in large numbers, continuing for the next four or five days to increase very considerably. Many of these wounded were placed in the cathedral, which for the occasion was being utilised as a hospital.

By the 10th it was no longer the wounded only who were coming into the city. On that day the beaten and retreating German army began to crowd in and to pass through to the north. This was no regular disciplined passage of unshaken troops, but, on the contrary, was the eager, reckless progress of an unrestrained mob of panic-stricken men flying blindly before a victorious opponent, for the most part wounded and all weather-tired, war-worn, and utterly vicious. Though many passed through to the north, yet great numbers were billeted on the townspeople, to such an extent, in fact, that the place soon overflowed with a reckless and riotous soldiery. Artillery was being madly driven through the streets, clearing them of people, shaking the houses to their very foundations, and its deafening noise almost drowning the thunder of the bombardment which was taking place in the neighbourhood. Now in the heat of the moment, excited by their defeat, the Germans were outraging the citizens and civil peace in every conceivable manner. Food and drink the soldiers were determined to have, and, in their undisciplined endeavours to obtain it, did not hesitate flagrantly to abuse and maltreat the unfortunate people and their property.

The result of all this was that by the morning of the 12th the citizens were in a state of profound apprehension, and the soldiers, fearful of a rising of the people, were in a condition of cowardly panic. Himself now fearing that the population would turn upon his men, the German Commander, on the morning of the 12th, forced the Mayor to issue the proclamation which is reproduced in Chapter XII. More than eighty of the principal inhabitants of the city, including four priests, had been seized as hostages, and, had the populace risen, or in any way whatever interfered with the German soldiers, then, according to the threat of the German Commander, not only would these hostages have been hanged, but also the inhabitants, and the city would have been set on fire. Reims, France, and the world will not readily forget the ordeal through which the city and its people were now passing.

Reims was thus, for the moment, occupied by an utterly defeated enemy army. How entirely it was, and in what state the German soldiers must have been, may be imagined from the perusal of the

following letter which was found on a dead German soldier and which tells of the terrible experiences which the Germans had gone through during their retreat from the south of Reims :

My dear Wife,—I have just been living through days that defy imagination. I should never have thought that men could stand it. Not a second has passed but my life has been in danger, and yet not a hair of my head has been hurt. It was horrible, it was ghastly. But I have been saved for you and for our happiness, and I take heart again, although I am still terribly unnerved. God grant that I may see you again soon, and that this horror may soon be over. None of us can do any more; human strength is at an end.

I will try and tell you about it.

On September 5 the enemy were reported to be taking up a position near St. Prix (north-east of Paris). The 10th corps, which had made an astonishingly rapid advance, of course attacked on the Sunday.

Steep slopes led up to heights which were held in considerable force. With our weak detachments of the 74th and 91st Regiments, we reached the crest and came under a terrible artillery fire that mowed us down. However, we entered St. Prix. Hardly had we done so than we were met with shell fire and a violent fusillade from the enemy's infantry. Our Colonel was badly wounded—he is the third we have had. Fourteen men were killed round me. . . . We got away in a lull without being hit.

The 7th, 8th, and 9th of September we were constantly under shell and shrapnel fire, and suffered terrible losses. I was in a house which was hit several times. The fear of a death of agony which is in every man's heart, and naturally so, is a terrible feeling.

How often I thought of you, my darling, and what I suffered in that terrifying battle, which extended along a front of many miles near Montmirail, you cannot possibly imagine. Our heavy artillery was being used for the siege of Maubeuge; we wanted it badly, as the enemy had theirs in force, and kept up a furious bombardment. For four days I was under artillery fire; it is like hell, but a thousand times worse.

On the night of the 9th the order was given to retreat, as it would have been madness to attempt to hold our position with our few men, and we should have risked a terrible defeat the next day. The first and third armies had not been able to attack with us, as we had advanced too rapidly. Our moral was absolutely broken.

In spite of unheard-of sacrifices we had achieved nothing. I cannot understand how our army, after fighting three great battles and being terribly weakened, was sent against a position which the enemy had prepared for three weeks, but naturally I know nothing of the intentions of our chiefs. . . . They say nothing has been lost. In a word, we retired towards Cormontreuil and Reims, by forced marches by day and night.

We hear that three armies are going to get into line, entrench, rest, and then start afresh our victorious march on Paris. It was not a defeat, but only a strategic retreat. I have confidence in our chiefs that every-

thing will be successful. Our first battalion, which has fought with unparalleled bravery, is reduced from 1,200 to 194 men. These numbers speak for themselves. . . .

The Proclamation above referred to had hardly been issued before the German army found it not only convenient, but even necessary, to evacuate the city. The French were in keen pursuit. Within an hour or two they had reoccupied the place.

On leaving Reims the German army proceeded to the north, occupying, in caves and quarries, the range of hills to the north of the city, commanding not only the city, but the road to Berry-au-Bac. On the north bank of the Aisne lower down in the same line to the east and south-east of Reims, they were also fortunate in being able to occupy heights that commanded Reims and the road and railway southward from that city to Châlons. The French were able to proceed as far as Berry-au-Bac, and to occupy that position and the heights to the west in a line southward down to, and past, Reims. This meant that the two great armies, strongly entrenched in positions fortified by Nature herself, were opposing one another in a desperate struggle to gain the complete mastery of this important strategic position. The city of Reims, unfortunately, was practically in the centre of this theatre of operations surrounded by opponents. The bombardment could now commence.

For more than a fortnight, from September 14, this bombardment continued with unremitting vigour.

The French having entered the city on the 12th, during that night and the following they placed a search-light in the belfry of the cathedral as a protection against enemy aeroplanes. The German Commander thereupon intimated that if the cathedral should be used in that manner it would be regarded by him as a military work and be made the objective of his artillery. An arrangement was accordingly arrived at between him and the French Commander, by which the search-light should be taken down and the cathedral not used for any military purpose whatever, including that even of observation. It was, however, to be continued to be used as a hospital for the wounded ; and at that time and henceforth it was to the knowledge of the enemy being so used, and was even the place where the German wounded, left behind in the evacuation of the city by the enemy, were being tended by the French.

Greatly to the surprise and horror, not only of Reims, but even of the whole civilised world, notwithstanding the arrangement which had been arrived at, the Germans on the 14th commenced

the bombardment not only of the town, but of the cathedral too. By the 17th and 18th the bombardment had become more furious; on the 19th, as though the Germans had suddenly become seized with a lust of destruction such as that which had overcome them at Louvain, they concentrated their artillery, with the most destructive and deadly effect, upon the cathedral. It was immaterial to them that the sacred edifice was without any military significance whatsoever, or that it was one of the architectural glories of the world, or even that it was then filled with their own wounded. As though animated by sheer devilry, the German barbarians did their foul work.

On the 17th two bombs struck the cathedral, one on the apse and the other on the north transept. On the following day the cathedral was again hit, the shell falling on the southern flying buttress and on the roof, killing a gendarme and several wounded Germans.

On the 19th the building was being fairly riddled with shells during the entire day, and about 4 o'clock in the afternoon the scaffolding surrounding the north tower caught fire; this fire lasted for about an hour, and during that time two further bombs struck the roof, setting it also on fire.

According to the statement of the curé of the cathedral, one of these bombs was incendiary. This statement was borne out by the fact that the flames spread through the roof timbers of the cathedral with a rapidity only possible as a consequence of the edifice having been struck by such a bomb. The scaffolding having thus caught fire, the flames descended until they reached the north door of the main façade, which caught rapidly, burned through, and communicated the fire to the straw covering the floor of the cathedral. This straw had been ordered by the German Commander himself, when in occupation of the city, for 3,000 of his wounded men whom he then intended to place in the cathedral. It was only his sudden evacuation of the city which prevented this plan being carried out. As a fact, there were at that time sixty or eighty German wounded in the cathedral. These unfortunate men were now filled with terror, as also were the other wounded. Ten or twelve of the Germans tried to escape through the door to the south, which led into a yard occupied by out-houses then temporarily in use as kitchens, and these all perished, either by fire or shells. The rest, perhaps fifty men, lay or stood in a state of mortal terror in the middle of the cathedral, not knowing what to do. The Bishop and several of the clergy, at infinite risk to themselves, came to their rescue and carried them out of the building through the north door to a place of safety in a printing-

shop near by. Some of these men were in such a deplorable state of sickness that they had to be dragged out of the cathedral whilst lying on their mattresses. These mattresses even were smouldering. The priests were able to rescue all the Germans except one—an officer—who, left alone in the cathedral, was subsequently discovered, burnt to death. All this had been done by the Germans in spite of the arrangement already mentioned and the fact that the cathedral tower was then flying the Red Cross Flag and the German Commander himself knew that the place was being used for hospital purposes and that some of his own wounded were being cared for there.

The well-known New York architect, Mr. Witney Warren, subsequently, on September 25, visited Reims and inspected the cathedral. According to his report the blaze of the burning straw caused the doors of the cathedral to be burnt, destroying the fine wooden tambours or vestibules surrounding these doors in the interior and also calcinating the extraordinary stone sculptures, decorating the entire interior of the western wall. These sculptures were peculiar to Reims, being in high full relief and cut out of the stone itself instead of being applied. Their loss in his view was irreparable.

During September 20 and 21 the fire in the cathedral continued to burn, the bombardment also persisting for at least another fortnight. On the 25th the beautiful and ancient church of St. Remy was also shelled by the Germans. One shell exploding in the interior destroying an immense quantity of glass. The civil hospital, which occupied the cloisters of the church, received nine bombs, one of which killed four of the patients in their beds and another one of the attendants. Over these buildings were also flying Red Cross flags.

Not only the cathedral and the church of St. Remy, but also the whole of the city suffered most severely from the bombardment. For days at a time shells would be falling about, one for every five minutes. The whole of the population were confined to their cellars, and it was an eerie experience to see the streets of a busy commercial and industrial city completely void of living beings and without any sound whatever other than that of a solitary echoing footstep and the constant roar of gun-fire. Shells were whistling over the town with a noise like wind in telegraph wires. In the cellars, where the citizens now were dwelling, conditions were of such a primitive character that the population appeared to be one of ancient cave-dwellers. There was not a street in the city that escaped partial destruction. Everywhere could be seen houses without roofs, shops and warehouses without

walls exhibiting a confused mass of furniture and goods, and buildings which were nothing but heaps of crumbled material.

On the 28th the bombardment was renewed for the day with special vigour. By the close of that bombardment the work of the enemy was practically concluded; the entire quarter of the city situated between the cathedral and the enemy's lines had been now destroyed, including the Episcopal Palace which contained the Archæological Museum, and the Episcopal Chapel and what was known as the "Apartment of Kings." The destruction caused by the Germans was not only ruthless, but absolutely useless. The only explanation that could be offered was the blind rage of the besieging army. The following is the conclusion of the report of Mr. Warren, to which reference has already been made:

All the wonderful glass in the nave of the cathedral is absolutely gone: that of the apse still exists, though greatly damaged.

The fire on the outside calcinated the greater part of the façade, the north tower, and the entire clerestory, with the flying buttresses and the turret crowning each of them. This stone is irretrievably damaged, and flakes off when touched. Consequently all decorative *motifs*, wherever the flame touches them, are lost. The treasury was saved at the commencement of the fire, and the tapestries for which Reims is renowned were fortunately removed before the bombardment. Half the stalls have been destroyed: the organ is intact, and several crucifixes and pictures in the apse are untouched.

If anything remains of the monument it is owing to its strong construction. The walls and vaults are of a robustness which can resist even modern engines of destruction, for even on September 24, when the bombardment was resumed, three shells landed on the cathedral, but the vaults resisted and were not even perforated. Had the cathedral of Amiens received the same punishment, the vaults, owing to the lightness of construction, would have given way, and the flying buttresses would have been crushed in the walls. Nothing would have remained but a mass of crumbled stone, with the exception perhaps of ruined towers.

On October 19 the French were so successful in fighting on the heights in the neighbourhood of the city that on that day the Germans were finally driven from their position.

CHAPTER XIV

THE RUSH TO THE SEA

German attempt to reach the sea, and to envelop the Allies' left wing—Decision of Allies to extend their front to sea—Dunkirk garrison extends to Douai—Met by Allies' extension from Amiens—Douai the centre of a great conflict—Effort of enemy to prevent joining up of Allies' front in this district—Battlefield extends from Amiens to Lille—Tactics of the enemy's infantry—Reinforcements of enemy in Lille district—Allies' serious decision on October 4—Their line a mere ribbon from Oise northwards—British troops again brought to position on extreme left—Fighting continues to October 9—Attacks on Hazebrouck—Belgian Government leaves Antwerp—Proclamation—Exchange of French and Belgian encouragement—October 9—Antwerp occupied by enemy—Belgian army escapes—Establishes itself on the Yser—Ghent, Bruges, and Ostend occupied by enemy—Exit from Ostend—Description in the *Daily Telegraph*—October 11 to 18—Battle from Ypres to the sea—Arras—Desperate fighting—Occupation by the enemy—The French retake the town—Roulers is reached by the Allies—October 18—October 19 and 20—Roulers is lost and regained by the Allies—Defensive position of Allies at Ypres reorganised—French reinforcements—The British are also reinforced—Ypres and its Cloth Hall—Fighting October 19 to 22—Results in complete barrier from the sea to the Swiss frontier.

WE have already described how, by the end of September, the Allies, after continuously pushing back the enemy and resisting his constant attacks, had reached and occupied a position on the Aisne. This closed the first act of the great struggle on the part of the Allies to reach the sea and extend their line to the west, which had been planned by the Commander-in-Chief as early as September 11, and had, during the following fortnight or so, developed so successfully that the Allies had now achieved their aim. Having thus reached the Aisne, the army of the Allies found it could do no more for the time being, in view of the fact that the enemy had just reinforced himself with his 6th Army. Not only could the Allies do no more, but they now ran the risk that the enemy, by means of a further afflux of forces, might succeed in turning them.

One is bound to give the enemy great credit for his determination, setting out as he had in sole reliance on the success of his bold plan to rush through Belgium and France to Paris, annihilating the resistance of the Allies in the shortest possible time, so that he then might turn from a conquered west to deal with the Russians on the east. After two months of unexpectedly desperate fighting he had received very important checks and set-backs; had been unable to pass unopposed through Belgium;

unable to occupy the Marne; and unable to turn the Allies upon the Aisne and in Picardy. Far from being daunted, however, he at once commenced, notwithstanding his non-success in the west, vigorously to attack the Russians and had already made great progress against them in the east. At the same time he was now initiating another great movement against the Allies with the reinforcements he had just received. He was to attempt yet again to envelop them before they could reach the sea, and he had so arranged that he should make this attempt with an enormous increase in the number of his troops. He believed that he would be so powerful as to be able to break through any possible resistance of the Allies. This effort on his part was undoubtedly justified by the gain which would be his if success were achieved. He would attain to the occupation of all the ports of Northern France and Flanders, and thus not only acquire a base of operations against Great Britain, but break through the lines of communication between the British army and its base.

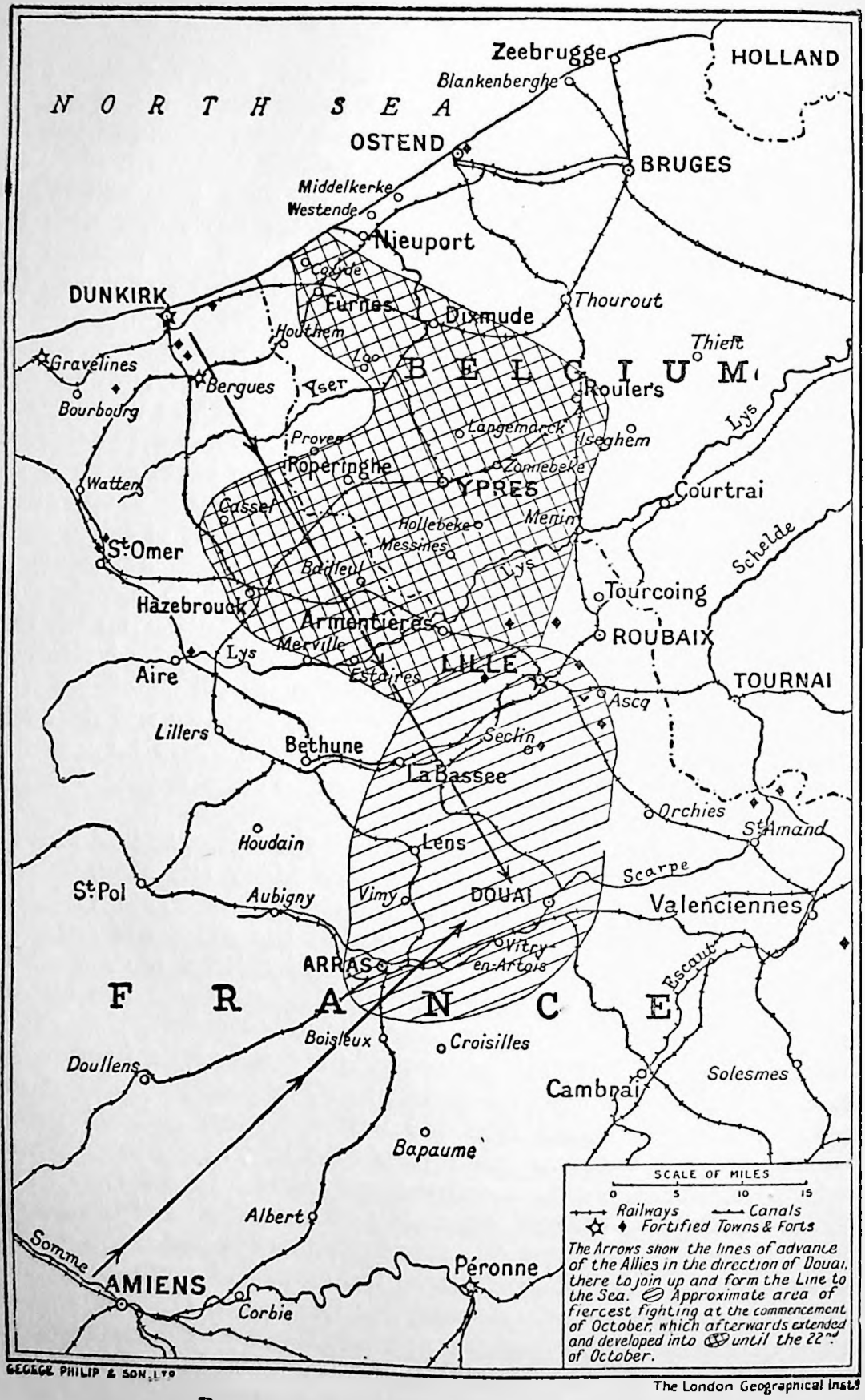
As a part of this plan the enemy decided to complete his victorious career in Belgium by reducing Antwerp and then occupying the whole of the west and south-west of Belgium. His efforts and successes in this direction up till October 9 have already been described. Here, for the present, we will deal with his operations in the north-west of France, where he was now making his chief effort against the Allies' line during the first weeks of October.

In view of the reinforcements which the Germans had brought up against the western extremity of the Allies' left wing, General Joffre in his turn brought up two army corps directed upon Amiens. In this manner the front of the army of the Allies was extended more to the north, to be advanced still farther northward by Beauvais to the east of Amiens. At Dunkirk there was already a strong garrison of French troops.

On October 1 General Joffre made a great and an important move. Simultaneously the garrison at Dunkirk pushed out into the direction of Douai and the new army on Amiens pushed upward, with a view to joining up with it. The Dunkirk army reached Douai, and two cavalry corps made a leap forward from Amiens to the same town, operating on both banks of the Scarpe, thus endeavouring to get into touch with the garrison at Dunkirk.

Douai thus inevitably became the centre of a great fight.

Douai, a town which for very many days in October was the centre of much and important fighting, had for centuries enjoyed a world-wide fame, was situated on both banks of the river Scarpe, carried on a large trade in flax, and had in its neighbourhood a



BATTLEFIELD BETWEEN ARRAS AND THE SEA

great cannon foundry. Throughout the surrounding country there were very many coal-pits. Its special claim to fame in Britain, however, lay in the fact that 300 years ago the famous English version of the Old Testament for Roman Catholics was here published, and which, including the New Testament translated in 1582, at Reims, is universally known as the Douai Bible. The town was the seat of a famous English college for the education of priests for England, but some years ago the college building was transformed into a barracks for cavalry. The town possessed, too, a beautiful church, a Palace of Justice housed in a building which was formerly an Abbey, a Court of Appeal which now occupies the hall of the Ancient Parliament of Flanders, and a handsome Hôtel de Ville, in the gothic style of architecture, which was built in the fifteenth century. But perhaps the greatest of the structural glories of Douai was its famous old Belfry of five stories, 130 ft. high, which rose in all its beautiful pride above the roof of the Hôtel de Ville, dominating both town and countryside.

The whole district around, from Lille to the north, down through Douai on the river Scarpe southward to below Arras, and extending from Douai to past Lens on the west, was now to be the scene of a tremendous long-drawn-out struggle which has since been referred to at times as the Battle of Lille, and at others as the Battle of Arras.

The Allies were here endeavouring to join up and solidly establish a line or point which, when once complete, would extend continuously from the North Sea to Switzerland. The Germans were exerting themselves to their utmost to prevent this operation. If the Allies should be successful in their effort, there was every reason to hope that they could not only hold up the German advance, but at last begin a general operation pushing back the Germans into their own country. If the Germans could only prevent the accomplishment of the efforts of the Allies, then, in every probability, Germany could make a great advance into France, so great as to ensure—at least for the time being—a great enemy success in the west. One can accordingly imagine without difficulty how strenuous would be the fighting here in view of the almost supreme importance of the issue.

On October 2 the great battle commenced. The weather was very misty in the early hours, remained hazy until the late afternoon, and became thicker again at night. The battle continued during that and the two following days in its utmost vigour, afterward continuing for more than a fortnight with special intensity from Lille and its neighbourhood, across the river Lys to Hazebrouck, Ypres, and Roulers, and even to Nieuport on the

coast. During that period the fighting developed from an effort on the part of the enemy to break through only that part of the line of the Allies in course of formation between Arras and Lille, to a desperate struggle to break down entirely the entire front of the Allies from Arras to the sea, in order that the enemy might envelop the Allies' left wing.

One important incident in the operation was a strategic movement of the British forces, decided upon by Sir John French, which began on October 3, with a view to supporting the northern flank of the Allies' effort to outflank the enemy and compel him to evacuate his position.

There are many points connected with the fighting methods of either side that may be of interest. The following description taken, from the narrative of "Eye-Witness," was given by a battalion commander who had been at the front since the commencement of hostilities and had fought both in the open and behind entrenchments. It must, however, be borne in mind that it only represents the experiences of a particular unit. It deals with the tactics of the enemy's infantry:

The important points to watch are the heads of valleys and ravines, woods—especially those on the sides of hollow ground—and all dead ground to the front and flanks. The German officers are skilled in leading troops forward under cover, in closed bodies, but once the latter are deployed and there is no longer direct personal leadership the men will not face heavy fire. Sometimes the advance is made in a series of lines, with the men well opened out at five or six paces' interval; at other times it is made in a line, with the men almost shoulder to shoulder, followed in all cases by supports in close formation. The latter either waver when the front line is checked, or crowd on to it, moving forward under the orders of their officers, and the mass forms a magnificent target. Prisoners have described the fire of our troops as pinning them to the ground, and this is certainly borne out by their action.

When the Germans are not heavily entrenched no great losses are incurred in advancing against them by the methods in which the British army has been instructed. For instance, in one attack over fairly open ground against about an equal force of infantry sheltered in a sunken road and in ditches, we lost only 10 killed and 60 wounded, while over 400 of the enemy surrendered after about 50 had been killed. Each side had the support of a battery, but the fight for superiority from infantry fire took place at about 700 yards and only lasted half an hour. When the Germans were wavering some of them put up the white flag, but others went on firing, and our men continued to do the same. Eventually a large number of white flags, improvised from handkerchiefs, pieces of shirt, white biscuit bags, etc., were exhibited all along the line, and many men hoisted their helmets on their rifles.

In the fighting behind entrenchments the Germans endeavour to gain ground by making advances in line at dusk or just before dawn, and then digging themselves in, in the hope no doubt that they may eventually get so near as to be able, as at manœuvres, to reach the hostile trenches in a single rush. They have never succeeded in doing this against us. If by creeping up in dead ground they do succeed in gaining ground by night, they are easily driven back by fire in the morning. A few of the braver men sometimes remain behind, at ranges of even 300 or 400 yards, and endeavour to inflict losses by sniping. Sharpshooters, also, are often noticed in trees or wriggling about until they get good cover. The remedy is to take the initiative and detail men to deal with the enemy's sharpshooters.

A few night-attacks have been made against us. Before one of them a party crept up close to the British line and set alight a hayrick, so that it should form a beacon on which the centre of the attacking line marched. Generally, however, in the night and early morning attacks, groups of forty or fifty men have come on, the groups sometimes widely separated one from another and making every endeavour to obtain any advantage from cover. Light-ball and search-lights have on some occasions been used. Latterly the attacks have become more and more half-hearted. Against us the enemy has never closed with the bayonet. The German trenches I have seen were deep enough to shelter a man when firing standing, and had a step down in rear for the supports to sit in.

As regards our own men, there was at first considerable reluctance to entrench, as has always been the case at the commencement of a war. Now, however, having bought experience dearly, their defences are such that they can defy the German artillery fire.

On October 2 the bulk of the new army of the French was very strongly attacked by the enemy in the neighbourhood of Arras and Lens. Confronting it were two corps of Cavalry Guards, four active army corps, and two reserve corps of the Germans. To cope with this strong resistance, a fresh French army corps was immediately transported and detrained in the Lille district.

But yet again were the Germans reinforced. Their attacks now became more and more pressing—so pressing, in fact, that on October 4 it was a very serious question for General Joffre whether, in view of the enemy's activity in the district west of the Oise and south of the Somme and also farther to the north, a retreat would not have to be made. Boldly, and at the same time fortunately, General Joffre brushed aside all idea of retreat. Whatever it should cost, he was determined that the struggle should be fought out to the bitter end. It was undoubtedly a case of fighting for the supreme issue; to retreat might mean irrevocable injury to the campaign of the Allies—defeat could mean no more—and in fighting there was always a chance that, with good generalship and soldiery, there might be victory where

defeat was so reasonably to be anticipated. Taking advantage, therefore, of the reinforcements which had been brought up into the Lille district, General Joffre ordered that there the offensive should be resumed.

The line of the Allies from the Oise northwards was now nothing really more than a mere ribbon of men as compared with the strong line of the enemy, and in the neighbourhood of Roye between the Oise and Arras this line was remarkably attenuated. Here it was that General Joffre found himself most in difficulty. Here it was that on Sunday the 4th the fiercest part of the struggle took place, the Allies being so badly pressed by an overwhelming enemy that they were forced to lose some ground. Notwithstanding this loss, however, the bold effort of General Joffre was more than justified, for the net result of the operations was that the Allies on the whole there held their ground.

Farther north, on the line Lille-Hazebrouck-Cassel, though the Allies found themselves confronted with eight divisions of German cavalry with very strong infantry support, yet with their brave, well-disciplined, and skilful cavalry and Territorials they were able, not only to hold their own—and holding their own meant much more, in a fight of the description that was now taking place, than merely finding themselves at its close in much the same position as when they began—but their long thin ribbon of men were able to maintain their position, and also, in maintaining it, to afford an opportunity for reinforcements to come up and develop the line into as solid a body as the line of the enemy. It was to this area of the field of battle that the force of Sir John French was being transported.

It will be remembered that at and after the retreat from Mons and at the commencement of the Battle of the Marne, it was the proud privilege of the British army to stand at the extreme west of the Allies' left wing, thus bearing the brunt of the enemies' determined attempts at envelopment. After the Battle of the Marne, however, the forces of the Allies had been so redistributed —the French themselves occupying the extreme left—that General French, pressing upon General Joffre a wish he had been persistently expressing since the end of September, desired that his army should resume its initial place on the left of the Allied Armies' wing. He had justified this desire to General Joffre on the ground that he would thereby acquire a greater facility for his communications, and also because of the impending arrival of reinforcements from Great Britain, the Colonies, and from India. In spite of the difficulties that such a removal involved, owing to the intensive use of the railways by the French units, General Joffre

decided at the beginning of October to meet the British Marshal's wishes and to have the British army removed from the Aisne. It was at the same time clearly understood that on the northern terrain the British army should co-operate to the same end as the French, namely, the stopping of the German right. In other terms, the British army was to prolong the front of the general disposition without a break, attacking as soon as possible and at the same time seeking touch with the Belgian army.

The transportation of the British army—by rail, motor, and marching—took much longer, however, than had been expected, and so it was not possible for the British to attack the Germans during that time, when they had only cavalry in the Lille district and farther to the north.

From October 5 to 9 the fighting throughout the whole area continued, while the 19th German Corps was being brought up from St. Hellegras to Lille in order to form part of the 1st Army there under General von Kluck. This meant an extremely exhausting march for the enemy reinforcement, lasting five days over a distance of 108 miles, so that during these days the fighting was without any great fury except during small periods of time in limited localities. For instance, on the 8th the enemy made a fairly strong attack on Hazebrouck.

This small town occupied a position of very great importance. It was a most important railway centre about 40 miles from Calais, and the junction not only for Calais and Dunkirk, but also for Ypres, Lille, and Paris. One can understand therefore, that the Germans would regard its capture by them as an important step in their efforts to occupy this part of the north of France so effectively as to prevent the line of the Allies being completed to the sea. Had they been able to occupy it they would not only have been able permanently to widen their western front, but would have had also a base from which cavalry raids upon Calais would have been possible. The attack of the enemy here failed, however.

Save for this instance and the gradual massing of the Germans, on the 6th, of increasingly large bodies of their cavalry near Lille, and the consequent stern struggle there between the two armies which resulted in little or no advantage being gained by the enemy, there was very little of remarkable incident taking place during these days. One must never forget, however, that " quiet " days in this struggle would really mean continuous heavy fighting going on during the whole time. On Monday the 5th there were three separate duels in the air between French and German aviators, one of which was visible from the British trenches. Two

of these were, so far as could be seen, indecisive; but in the third the French airmen were victorious, and brought down their opponents, both of whom were killed, by machine-gun fire. One of the latter was so burnt as to be unrecognisable. On the 8th the Allies gained some ground to the north of Arras and had generally made some slight progress north of the Aisne.

The intensity of this continuous fighting, notwithstanding there were many "quiet" days, was evidenced by the fact that between September 12 and October 8, the number of killed and wounded and missing from the British force alone amounted to no less a figure than 561 officers and 12,980 men.

In the meanwhile fighting had also been taking place in the centre and right of the left wing of the Allies, the enemy having made violent attacks against the French army in the Argonne and on the Meuse, only, however, to be repulsed.

On the 6th the Belgian Government had left Antwerp. After a short stay at Ostend, it took refuge on French soil at Havre. Thus a state of affairs almost unique in modern times was now to exist, the French Government having its headquarters in a provincial town, namely Bordeaux, and the Belgian Government having its headquarters outside its own country, at Havre. Yet neither France nor Belgium was in the least degree dispirited. The following Proclamation was published by the Belgian Government on leaving Belgium:

CITIZENS,—For nearly two months and a half Belgian soldiers have, by heroic exertions, defended the soil of our Fatherland, foot by foot. The enemy counted on annihilating our army at Antwerp, but a dignified and orderly retreat has shattered this hope and secured the preservation of military forces which will continue to fight for the first and most just of causes.

From thenceforth these forces are to be operating towards our southern frontier, where they will be in touch with our Allies. Thanks to this powerful assistance, the triumph of Right is assured. The circumstances of to-day add yet another trial to the sacrifices which have been already accepted by the Belgian nation with a courage equalled only by their extent.

To save ourselves from playing into the hands of the invader, it is necessary for the Belgian Government to establish its seat, provisionally, in a place where we can, with our army in touch with the forces of France and England, ensure the exercise and continuity of the nation's Government. That is why the Government leaves Ostend to-day, with a grateful memory of the reception accorded by the town.

The Government will be established provisionally at Havre, where the noble friendship of the French Republic offers not only the complete exercise of our authority and duties, but the fullest sovereign rights.

Citizens, this temporary ordeal to which our patriotism must submit

will, we are certain, be soon avenged. Belgian administration will be carried on as far as local circumstances permit. The King and the Government rely upon the wisdom of your patriotism. On your part you may count on our entire devotion, on the valour of our army, and the assistance of the Allies, to hasten the hour of our common deliverance.

Our dear country, so foully betrayed and treated by one of the Powers which had sworn to guarantee her neutrality, has aroused the ever-increasing admiration of the whole world by reason of the unanimity, the courage, and the foresight of all her children. She will continue to deserve this admiration, which is her great comfort to-day.

To-morrow she will emerge from these trials greater and fairer than before by reason of the fact that she has suffered in the cause of justice and for the honour of civilisation.

Long live Belgium, free and independent!

The Proclamation was signed by all the Ministers, who went to Havre on board the Belgian mail-boat with their staffs.

Directly Monsieur Poincaré, the French President, heard of the intention of the Belgian Government to transfer itself to Havre, he telegraphed to King Albert, offering him the hospitality of the French city and assuring him that the sovereignty of the Royal King would be assured there. The King at once conveyed his thanks to the President, adding, "We await the hour of mutual victory with unshakable confidence; fighting side by side for a just cause, our courage will never fail." The Belgian Prime Minister, M. de Broqueville, also telegraphed to M. Viviani expressing the gratitude of the Belgian Government for the welcome accorded to it by the French Government. He added: "Belgium, who has sacrificed everything for the defence of honesty, honour, and liberty, regrets nothing. She has the confidence arising from the knowledge of a duty accomplished and the certainty of the triumph of the Allies' cause." M. Viviani replied that the Government of the Republic was proud to extend its hospitality to the noble and valiant nation which, sacrificing everything for the care of its honour and for duty, had rendered such signal services to the common cause. "I am sure," he added, "that the close union of the Allied nations will ensure the definite triumph of justice and right."

The Belgian Premier, too, sent the following telegram to the President:

DUNKIRK, *October* 13.

MONSIEUR LE PRÉSIDENT,—At this moment, when the fortune of arms leads it to the hospitable soil of the friend of Belgium, the Government of the King has the honour to present to the Chief of the State its homage

and its most respectful sentiments, and begs him to be kind enough to accept the expression of its unshakable faith in the triumph of right. It rejoices that France, united with Great Britain and Russia, is the generous and proud champion of that right.

Monsieur Poincaré replied as follows:

BORDEAUX, *October* 13.

MONSIEUR LE PRÉSIDENT DU CONSEIL,—As we have personally assured His Majesty King Albert, it is with pride that France will welcome to-day on her soil the Government of that noble people which is defending with so much heroism its national independence and outraged public right. The Government of the Republic does not separate the cause of Belgium from that of France, and has taken all the necessary measures so that the Government of the King may retain in the town of Havre the free exercise of its powers. The certitude of final victory will lighten for you, as for the French departments still invaded, the passing trial from which our countries will emerge more closely united, stronger, and greater than ever.

Antwerp having fallen on October 9, the Belgian army, which was covered by 8,000 men of the British Naval Brigade and 600 of the French Bluejackets, at first intending to retire as far as to the north of Calais, afterwards determined to make a stand in Belgian territory. Unfortunately, the condition of the Belgian troops, exhausted by a struggle of more than three months, did not allow any immediate hopes to be based upon them. This situation weighed upon the plans of the Allies, and was bound to delay their execution. It meant that a much longer time would be taken, and much more fighting be undergone, than had been anticipated, before the Allies could effectively and finally establish their front right to the sea.

The fall of Antwerp and its occupation by the Germans was not the great advantage, thanks to the absence of foresight which had marked the methods of their investment of the city, they had anticipated. At first, when the Germans had penetrated the fortifications of Antwerp, which were then regarded as the greatest and most impregnable of the world, the *chef d'œuvre* of the celebrated General Brialmont, the Germans flattered themselves that they had achieved a definitive triumph. They soon discovered that they had made a mistake. They discovered also that the mistake was one which, if those in command of their armies had exercised only the least intelligent generalship, could have been avoided. In general, a fortress is designed to prevent the enemy's access to a region without natural defences or to bar progress through a defile or along a road or a railway. Antwerp, however,

regarded as a fortress, possessed a special—if not unique—character of its own. It had been constructed, not in the neighbourhood of threatened frontiers, but, on the contrary, as far away from such frontiers as possible. Its object was to serve as a last national resource, as a place of refuge for the Belgian army, in the event, which had now happened, that it could not hold the country. It follows, therefore, that the reduction of Antwerp was of value to the Germans, mainly, only if they could capture the army which had taken shelter there. The besieging army, however, in attacking the forts on the right bank, of the Scheldt without establishing an investment on the left bank, had committed a profound error, allowing, as a result, the Belgian army to escape and join up with the Allies. The German victory of Antwerp, therefore, was an incomplete one. It had a value, however, as some assurance of the safety of the enemy communications in an advance to the coast and thence southward to Paris. Such an advance was now the design of the Germans. It was ill-conceived, however, inasmuch as its execution meant the addition of another main operation to the one they had already initiated and were endeavouring to accomplish against and through the centre of the Allies' left wing.

The Germans did their best to remedy the error of which they had been guilty at Antwerp by immediately following up the retreating Belgian army. Inasmuch as this pursuit did not lead to the capture of any considerable number of Belgians, whose army was fortunately able to establish itself safely behind the river Yser, it may be accounted a failure, though it was successful in effecting the occupation of Ghent, Bruges, and Ostend, places which fell into their hands without resistance.

Ostend was occupied by the enemy on the 16th. He had now reached the coast. It only remained to seize Dunkirk, Calais, and Boulogne! For some days, up to and including the 14th, there had been an absolute outpouring of the Belgians from their native land through this port. In the course of the invasion of Belgium up to this time, there had been instance after instance of the seizure by the enemy of Belgian towns and the crowding out of the inhabitants in anticipation. In many cases the crowds of refugees had been enormous, and the scenes pitiable beyond description. Now, however, at Ostend, the invaders had reached the sea. It was therefore no longer a question of the people flowing from a town into the country, but taking flight from their land itself. One can imagine, therefore, the excitement and the anguish which would mark the flight of the Belgians from Ostend. They were now for the most part leaving their country entirely,

forced to trust themselves to the sea—an element unknown to and feared by very many of them—and find refuge either in France or even across the water in England. Vessels of all descriptions were requisitioned and over-crowded—steamers, sailing ships, fishing-boats, barges, pleasure yachts, and even open rowing boats were seized and used by the panic-stricken throngs. The scenes at Folkestone and other places where these refugees landed in England were more than heart-rending, terrified and exhausted men, women, and children arriving in vessels of every description, from steam cargo-boats filled with an unaccustomed burden of humanity so closely packed that movement was almost impossible, down to the little open rowing-boat—a mere river craft—which ordinarily would scarcely accommodate half a dozen people, but now was crowded with perhaps twenty, and had, moreover, made a long and terrible passage across the sea almost submerged. The following is from the account of the German entry into Ostend contributed by Captain Granville Fortescue to the *Daily Telegraph*:

OSTEND, *October* 15.

The last remaining ship left the port early this morning; trawlers, fishing smacks, every craft available, even row-boats and improvised rafts, had been taken by the refugees. Only a few homeless wanderers remain, unable to get away. These sit patiently on the digue, with their little bundles beside them.

Suddenly came the clatter of horse's hoofs, and a Belgian galloped along the digue, shouting, "The Germans are coming. The Germans are coming." Beating his tired horse, he dashed through the town, calling the hoarse-voiced warning.

In five minutes a Lieutenant and six Uhlans trotted into the central square and took formal possession of Ostend. These were followed by a detachment of about twenty cyclists, who rode exploring all the city streets. . . .

The confusion of the crowds that struggled in the station and on the quay last night comes to me as a nightmare. There were 4,000 gathered in the boat station, nearly all women and children. Many of them had been in their places twenty-four hours, without food and drink. Several children died. When the last boat cast off, the despairing ones, in the rear, who saw their chance of escape slipping away, pressed forward frantically, and pushed half a dozen to their death in the water between the pier and the ship's side.

In the town house after house is empty. Some stand open, just as their owners left them. They remind one of Pompeii. I looked in one house. A pot of jam and half a tin of biscuits, with the plates on the table, marked where the family had had a hasty lunch before leaving. A vase of flowers stood on the mantel, but the floor was littered with bits of twine and brown

paper, the debris of hasty packing. Another empty house I saw occupied by a newly arrived family of refugees.

General von der Goltz came by motor within half an hour. He is still straight after fifty years of soldiering. He stayed but a short time. With the Burgomaster, the Chief of the Police, and the American Consul, he started back for Bruges. The American Consul's car, with himself and the Chief of Police, led the way, while the Military Governor of Belgium followed in the Burgomaster's car, seated beside that dignitary. This seemed rather risky on the part of General von der Goltz, as no escort accompanied them. In Bruges they arranged the usual terms of surrender, but no tribute was levied.

The German soldiers by this time were cycling up and down the digue. Suddenly a vessel flying the French flag appeared out of the low mist, heading straight for the Ostend pier. On she came into the unknown danger. I stood with the crowd on the digue watching tensely. Moving very slowly she entered the long pier.

Then a citizen ran out to meet her. He was shouting and waving both arms. The vessel stopped instantly. Another moment it was going full speed astern. Not too soon, for two German cyclists were speeding down the long pier. Perhaps half an hour later a ship's launch appeared out of the fog, also heading for the pier. This little craft put about more quickly, evidently discovering the group of Germans on the pier head. These at once waved to it to come on, which invitation went unheeded. Then they opened fire, at an ineffectual range, however.

By nightfall not more than 100 German soldiers had entered the town. A few of these had gone on as far as Middlekerk. Rooms for forty officers are engaged for to-morrow at the Hotel Royal Phare, and it is said that a garrison of not more than 4,000 will hold Ostend.

OSTEND, *October* 16.

Early this morning the officers of the German Staff came by motor to Ostend. The clatter of cavalry, the heavy tramp of infantry, all testified that the enemy were indeed in possession of the town. When I wished to leave I was held up at every place by squads of Uhlans, who guarded the roads. . . . The 3rd German Reserve Corps were occupying Ostend. Their staff officers, about forty in number, were enjoying a sumptuous breakfast at the Royal Phare Hotel. Magnums of Irroy and quarts of Burgundy lined the centre of the two long tables. A dozen military motors stood outside the hotel, and the city had again taken on the bustle of war preparations. The scene was the same as it was two days ago, except that now German officers fill the hotels, German soldiery the streets, and the musical note of the German automobile horn has taken the place of the raucous note of the other one.

The Belgians established on the Yser had now an opportunity to recuperate, and there, later on, was to be the scene where the fate of Boulogne, Calais, and Dunkirk would be very largely

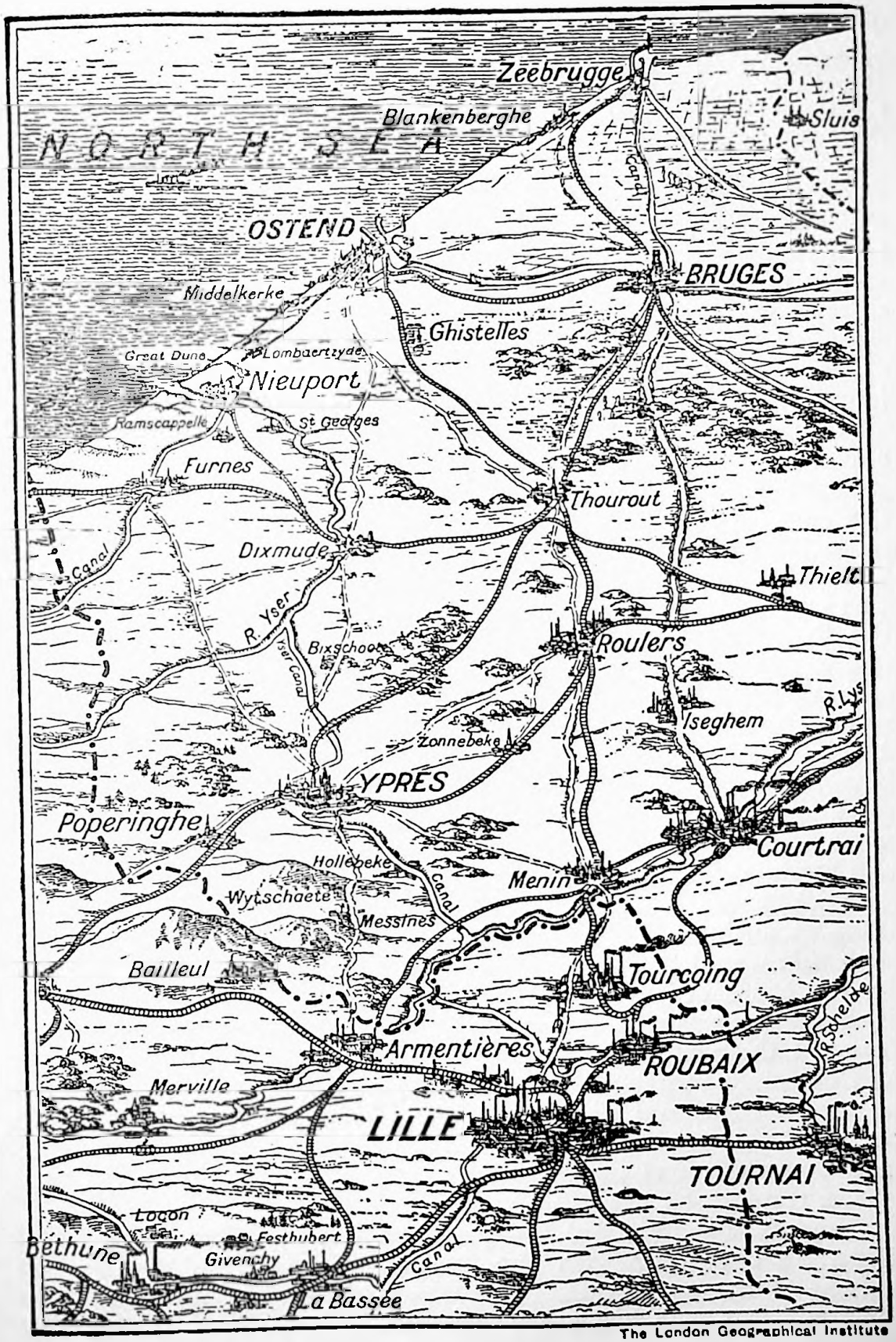
decided. When the battle of the Yser did commence, on October 14, the Allies were not only able to support the war-worn Belgians, but so to dispose their forces that the brunt of the fight was borne by the British and the French.

We must now return a day or two to Sunday, October 11, on which day began the long-drawn-out battle of Ypres-Armentières, or rather a battle which, commencing between two opposing fronts extending roughly throughout the whole distance from Ypres to Armentières, finished with the Allies successfully occupying a position considerably to the north-east.

For four days the battle raged until the 14th, when the army of the Allies reached Ypres, occupying the front Ypres-Messines-Neuve Eglise-Merville-Lestrem-Richebourg-Saint Vast, the battle then proceeding until the 16th, when the left wing of the Allies having, on the 15th, been completely extended from Ypres to the sea, was able, in spite of a strong opposition by the enemy, to make progress to the east of Ypres. On the 18th the cavalry of the Allies reached even as far as Roulers and Cortemark, having driven the enemy back more than 30 miles.

The town of Arras suffered very severely in the course of this battle. Here again we had an instance of a town, the seat of a glorious old cathedral, and possessing beautiful and ancient architectural monuments of the greatest value and interest, such as the wonderful belfry of the Hôtel de Ville, being ruined quite needlessly by the deliberate shell-fire of a ruthless enemy. There then was, as a fact, no practical occasion for such a bombardment of the town by the Germans. The two opposing armies had taken up their positions on opposite ranges of hills between which the town was situated, the Germans on the east, the Allies on the west. To the north and south of the town were also hills, so that the place itself rested in a circular basin. Its towers, therefore, could be of no military use whatever, as, for example, for observation on the part of the French, who, stationed on their own hills, were enabled there to see much more of the enemy's position and movements than could have been seen from any building in the town. Though this was so, the Germans were determined not to spare the structural beauties of the place. The cathedral was shelled and the belfry ruined. The whole town was made a scene of desolation and death.

The fighting around Arras continued for nearly a fortnight. Enormous forces of Germans crowded increasingly on the eastward heights, from October 4 bombarding the town continuously. On Wednesday, October 7, the bombardment was so vigorous and deadly, inflicting such mortal injury to the people, that



The London Geographical Institute

THE BATTLEFIELD OF YPRES

the French, fearing what would happen in case the Germans should occupy the town, did their best to clear it of its inhabitants. All men of military age, between eighteen and forty-five, were sent away to the coast. Later on an effort was made to get the women and old and invalid men out of the town; but in this the French had much difficulty, these people being so loath to leave their homes and local associations. So, notwithstanding the efforts of the authorities to remove the population to places of safety, great numbers continued to remain. They met the anticipated fate. Many were maimed and killed by the enemy's shells, and some who had hidden themselves in their cellars found the houses above them battered down upon their heads.

On the 7th or 8th the enemy was fortunate enough to gain entrance to the town. He had, however, to pay dearly for his good fortune. In crossing the stream which skirted the town to the east, his forces were almost decimated; only a straggling remnant were able to gain a real footing in the place. Their stay was very short there, for the French gave them no rest whatever. The advance guard of the invaders soon being greatly reinforced, the French poured an immense troop of infantry into the town in order to throw the Germans out. There now ensued a desperate struggle in the streets somewhat reminiscent of the street fighting at Charleroi. Great troops of infantry collided with one another fighting hand to hand, each man on his own with rifle and with bayonet, each side being supported by the deadly fire of its machine-guns. All the main streets of Arras were thus occupied. The scene throughout the town was indescribable—blood and death and struggling and fallen men everywhere.

Such fighting as this could not continue long. Death let loose to such an extent meant that very soon either none of each side would be left alive or at best only a few. Fortunately for the cause of the Allies, the enemy suffered worse than they. Immediately this was apparent to the defenders of the town they renewed their efforts almost unconsciously with a nearly blind, and certainly reckless, dash and enthusiasm. The enemy could no longer withstand them. The French became the victors and cleared the town of all the Germans, who hurried as best they could, in a disorderly and undisciplined mob, towards their own lines.

On October 18 the Allies reached Roulers.

Roulers was occupied by the French only after a long and desperate encounter with the enemy. When first the French arrived at the town, their force was comprised of no more than 200 Dragoons who had come on from Ypres. They found only 100 Germans there at the time, the remnant of a force of about

40,000 with which the enemy had occupied the town about a week before. As soon, however, as the French Dragoons came upon the scene the handful of the enemy were very strongly reinforced, and it was not until late in the evening, after thousands of French reinforcements had arrived, that the enemy was put to flight.

Having once occupied the town, the French placed guns in the surrounding hamlets and on the Dixmude road, erected barricades in the streets and stationed machine-guns in the doorways of the corner houses and behind the letter pillar-boxes. They anticipated, and, as it turned out, rightly, a speedy return of the enemy. On the morning of Monday the 19th, the Germans began to swarm into the place, crowding along the roads and over the fields from Bruges and Ghent. They, too, placed guns in position outside the town on the side upon which they were advancing. The guns of the French on the one side of the town now began to bombard the Germans on the other side, the latter replying in their turn. The town suffered severely from the shells of the enemy. Then the town was rushed by large bodies of German infantry and a hand-to-hand fight began to take place in the streets, the rifle and bayonet work of the soldiers being supplemented on either side by the raking fire of the machine-guns. The result of a day's fight of this character was that the French were turned out of the town and once more the Germans were in occupation. That occupation was not destined to last long. On Tuesday morning the French made another strong attack on the place, and, supported by a deadly cannonading, their infantry flooded the streets and thrust the enemy out of the town once and for all at the point of their bayonets.

Having thus occupied Roulers and also reached Cortemarck, the Allies found that in view of the continual reinforcement of the German right, their army was not sufficiently powerful to maintain the advantage attained during the previous few days. Being determined, however, to attain their end and to make their front inviolable, they brought two Territorial Divisions from Dunkirk under General Bidon and proceeded to occupy and organise as strongly and permanently as possible their defensive position at Ypres.

On the next day the transportation of the British forces to the north, so long desired by Sir John French, was at length successfully completed. Sir Douglas Haig's 1st Corps, which had that day detrained at St. Omer, immediately concentrated between St. Omer and Hazebrouck, and began to advance through Ypres to Thourout with the idea of capturing Bruges and driving the enemy towards Ghent.

The army of the Allies was now so placed that Ypres became at once a *point d'appui* enabling the French and British to prepare and maintain their connection with the Belgian army, which was then in the last stage of exhaustion. To the north of the river Lys were placed the French forces which formed the French army; farther to the north and north-west was the British army, now including the 2nd and 3rd Corps, extending to the Yser; and yet again to the north-west were the soldiers of Belgium on the other bank of that river. Belgium, at first, had her army consisting of two territorial divisions, four divisions of cavalry, and a naval brigade, but it was now strengthened by elements from other points on the front. These forces were equivalent together, when ultimately brought into position some weeks later, to five Army Corps, a division of cavalry, a territorial division, and sixteen regiments of cavalry plus sixty pieces of heavy artillery.

Ypres, a town which in years long past had been the scene of a succession of rebellions and sieges by Alva, the Gueux, and several times by the French, was now destined, in the twentieth century, to become the centre of a long-drawn-out struggle between the Allies and the Germans for a period of at least seven months, during which desperate battles were to succeed one another in such numbers that it would be almost impossible to distinguish any one in particular as the Battle of Ypres. Formerly the capital of West Flanders, with a population of 200,000, Ypres was now a small town of about 17,000, its inhabitants devoting most of their energy to the manufacture of linen and lace. The streets were full of interesting and ancient dwellings, but the glory of the town was its Cloth Hall completed in the thirteenth century and yet remaining one of the noblest specimens of the rich gothic architecture of its period, being surmounted by a lofty Belfry Tower and flanked by corner turrets. The Town Hall, too, was a building of remarkable interest, dating as it did from the sixteenth century. The church, formerly the cathedral of the diocese, with its tower 190 ft. in height, was one of the most important thirteenth-century churches in Belgium. It was this historical and beautiful city which once more was to be the scene of a desolating and deadly campaign.

On and after October 19, for about a fortnight, the British 2nd Corps had to defend its position against very superior numbers. On the 20th the centre of the British line was heavily pressed; advanced posts of the 3rd Corps were forced to retire; and the enemy was able to occupy Legaire. A counter-attack, however, resulted in the recovery of the Allies' trenches. The Royal Irish

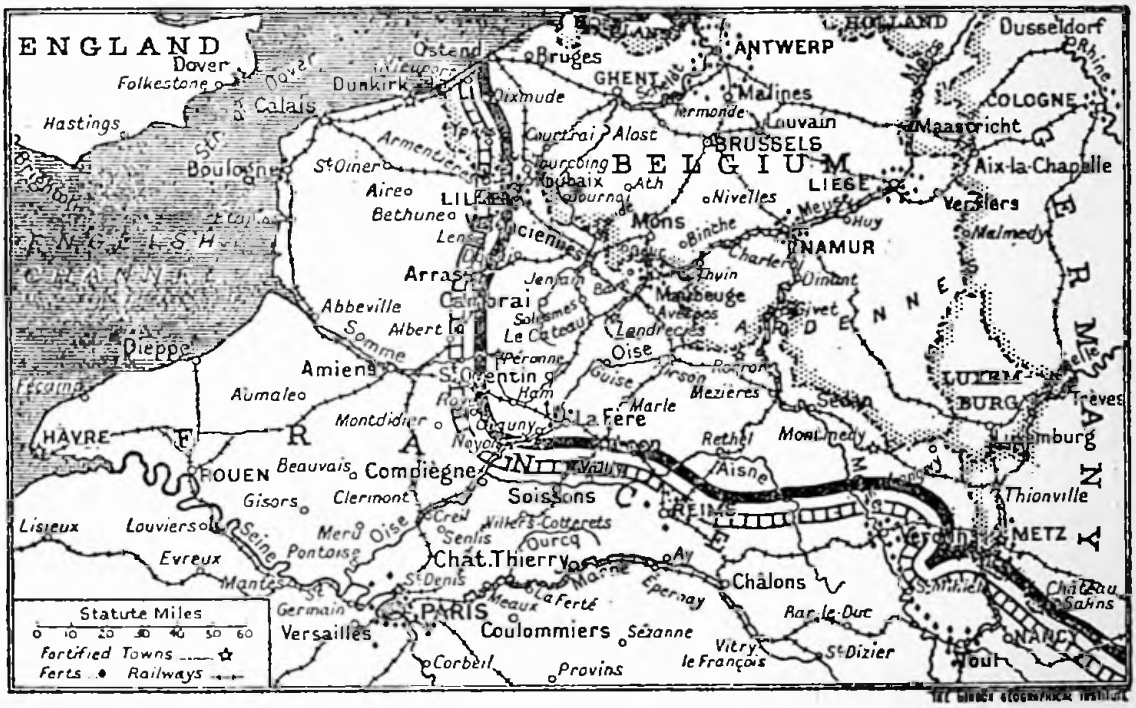
THE GERMAN OCCUPATION OF LILLE.

The occupation of Lille by the Germans was accompanied by a great spectacular display, the streets were festooned with flags and garlands as for a fête. The Crown Prince of Bavaria, the central mounted figure, headed a great military procession of triumph.

Regiment, which had stormed Le Pilly on the previous day, was unfortunately cut off and surrounded.

During this day three British monitors which had been recently bought by the British Government from Brazil, rendered valuable assistance to the Allies on the Belgian coast by shelling the German right flank.

On the following day, the 21st, Sir John French found it advisable to abandon the idea of capturing Bruges with Sir Douglas Haig's 1st Corps, owing to the unexpected reinforcements of the enemy. Instead, and in view of the fact that his forces were



SITUATION ON OCTOBER 22.

then insufficient for the moment to permit of his taking the initiative, he adopted the defensive right along the very extended and attenuated British front, until General Joffre was later on in a position to send him further support. The 2nd Cavalry Division was compelled to fall back. The Belgian army, now beginning to recuperate, was firmly holding a line of about 20 miles in length.

On October 22 the Allies' left wing, which six weeks earlier had been bounded by the Noyon district, now rested at Nieuport, thanks to the successive deployment of five fresh armies—three French armies, the British army, and the Belgian army. North of Pilkem, the enemy had that day penetrated the British lines, but the trenches which were then lost were recovered on the

following day after severe fighting. Frequent attacks were also being made along the whole line of the 3rd Corps, but each was repulsed by the British, though with great loss. Our 5th Division was driven out of Violaines and the 2nd Corps retired to a prepared position, Givenchy-Fauquissart.

Thus had the co-ordination decided upon by General Joffre attained its end. The barrier from the sea to Switzerland was now completely established. It remained only to maintain it against the enemies' offensive; that was the object and the result of the Battle of Flanders which continued from October 22 to November 15.

The line of the Allies ran from Arras northward through Lens, La Bassée, Armentières, Ypres, to Nieuport on the coast. Along this line, or in its immediate neighbourhood, were many small towns and villages which subsequently were to become famous as the scenes of battles of almost ferocious intensity. Now the line was completed and occupied, the question was: what would next happen? Facing it, and holding it in close contact throughout its length, was the enemy line, behind which were his lines of communication with the interior from which unlimited reinforcement was possible. Neither side was in possession of any position of natural advantage. The whole country through which the two fronts extended was for all practical purposes one great plain, each side, therefore, entrenching itself in the ground awaiting possibilities, for, until now, entrenched fighting on a gigantic scale had never been a matter of practical experience on the Continent. Would either side, by assault or otherwise, attain the victory over the other and push back, or break through, the opposing line, or would months, perhaps, have to elapse before any decisive result could be attained? The armies were, without a doubt, on the eve of great events, replete with profound possibilities. Were the Allies to throw back the Germans out of France and Belgium, or rather out of these parts of those countries, or were the Germans to attain their immediate objective and occupy Dunkirk, Calais, and Boulogne, and then be in a position, not only to break the lines of communication of the British army, but to threaten the British Isles themselves and also to advance to Paris from the north-west? In England there was already much talk as to the possibilities of invasion. There were rumours, which doubtless were initiated by the enemy as the bluff-part of their campaign, that when the coast opposite England should be attained by the Germans they would place guns there which, if they could not effectively shell England from the Continent, would at least command the Channel so that the enemy fleet could bombard our

coast. It was rumoured, too, that then the Germans would seize the opportunity to invade England, transporting their troops in submarines, 100 men at a time, and that an immense fleet of submarines was ready in reserve for this purpose. One can readily believe, therefore, that in Britain there was now as much interest being taken in the barrier that the Allies had erected from Arras to Nieuport as there had been in the days, not long passed, when the Allies took their stand against the enemy on the Marne.

We have said that the country which the two fronts traversed was a plain. South of Ypres, however, there were some slight elevations. On each side of Ypres-Armentières on the south, along a considerable distance northward to the sea, the country was cut up with canals, slow water-courses, very many good hard roads and numerous railways, all incident to, and part of, the coal-mining and manufacturing districts which covered a great part of the line of fighting.

CHAPTER XV

THE RALLY OF THE EMPIRE

The Germans expect the break-up of the Empire on outbreak of war—The armies of India—of Canada—of Australasia—of South Africa—The spontaneous enthusiasm of the Dominions and India for the Allies' cause—Their offers of aid—The King's thanks—The ambition of the coloured races—Canada offers an army—Her Premier's statement—The forces she agreed to raise—The linking of her regiments with the British—Organising her army—The secrecy of the preparations—The historic transport across the Atlantic—Reception at Plymouth—The Canadians in camp at Salisbury—Australia's army—Transport to Egypt—Dangers of the voyage—New Zealand's army—Her Expeditionary Force seizes Samoa—The Indian contingent—Arrival at Marseilles—Reception—The different castes and religions—In camp at Marseilles—At Orleans.

FOR many years before the war it was a cardinal belief among the German people, ever increasing in certainty, that once a great nation such as Germany should enter into the lists against Britain, the British Empire would fall to pieces, mainly by reason of the defection of its colonies and overseas dominions. The British Empire, in the view of the Pan-Germanist, was a sham. He loved to quote a remark of Lord Curzon regarding the position of the English in India, that "the English are only a bit of froth upon an unfathomable ocean." India herself was expected to be the first to attempt to part company with Britain, directly the British Empire found itself in difficulties. Relying upon the diversities of races and religions and the increasing nationalism of the peoples there, Germany anticipated that, with a very little force from without, a little discord within, and the waves would swallow up that "bit of froth." So, too, with Egypt, to whose aid against Britain the Mediterranean Powers would readily and effectively rush. And, as for the self-governing colonies, there could be no doubt as to what would occur. Canada, having, in German eyes, no real interest in the Empire, would remain neutral, hesitating to expose herself to assault from the United States. Moreover, what military force could Canada contribute to the defence of the Empire even if she desired to? So with Australasia, where no substantial military or naval forces were established. Britain's flag would be deserted, lest by chance, should she join in the war, the Japanese should seize the opportunity to obtain a dominant

footing in the island continent. As for South Africa, it was obvious to the Germans that England could expect no help from her. Not only would she be exposed to attack from German East or West Africa, but her own white population, because of the large Boer element, would be more favourable to Germany than to England. And even should South Africa have the forces and the will to fight for the Empire, her fighting men could not be spared, inasmuch as they would find full occupation in repressing the insurrections of the coloured races which would assuredly take place.

There is no doubt whatever that Germany had not only counted upon the disloyalty of the British overseas dominions, but had, during many years preceding the war, persistently by secret and subtle methods endeavoured to undermine their loyalty. That these peoples, so far separated in distance as they were from the mother-country, so independent of the Imperial Government as they were by reason of their own liberal constitutions, so filled as they were with the spirit of independent nationalism, could stand the strain of the real sacrifice which participation in the war would demand, was deemed by Germany to be highly improbable.

The war commenced at last. The day came when these beliefs of Germany were to be tested. Would Germany have to meet a great and united Empire, or only an England deserted by her children ?

Britain across the seas did not hesitate in its answer to Germany. Without any sort of request by England and the Imperial Parliament, and entirely on their own initiative, the self-governing constituents of the Empire and India rallied to the British flag, eagerly making common cause with the Motherland against her foes.

In India there already existed an army very considerable in number and with much experience in warfare. In addition to Reserves, Volunteers, and other special units, the army in India consisted of British troops stationed there to the number of about 77,000 and a native army of regular regiments consisting of nearly 160,000 men. Roughly speaking, the army in India numbered about 236,000.

That army consisted of such units of the British army as for the time being were serving in India. There was also a native regular army with volunteers and other auxiliary, and also troops raised and maintained by the independent Native States and placed by their rulers at the disposal of the Imperial Government. The native army was divided into class regiments or battalions,

so that the men might be of all one caste, as, for instance, in the Gurkha regiment. Those class units, which consisted of mixed castes, were subdivided where necessary to preserve caste isolation. Thus a regiment might have two squadrons of Sikhs, one of Mussulmans, and one of Pathans.

The employees of the State Railways were compelled to belong to the Auxiliary Force in India. Armies for their own defence or to assist the Imperial Force in a war with the European Powers were also raised in the self-governing dominions of the Empire by the native Princes, each dominion being entitled to adopt such form of universal training as it might consider necessary to raise the force required.

In the self-governing dominions and many other of the British colonies local military forces were maintained at the expense of their respective Governments. Canada, the Australian Commonwealth, New Zealand, and the South African Union had permanent forces of varying strength, in most cases composed of all three arms. These permanent forces were organised on the British model. In addition, in most of these dependencies there were considerable forces of militia and volunteers of varying efficiency. There was not, however, any federation whatsoever for imperial defence, though at the Colonial Defence Conference held in 1909 a plan for military defence was drawn up in outline as the foundation of a proposed scheme for organising the forces of the Empire wherever they might be, so that they might be capable of being rapidly bound into one homogeneous army.

In Canada the military forces were divided into two classes—the Permanent Force and the Active Militia. The Permanent Force, which was raised on the voluntary principle and for a period of three years, had a total strength of only about 3,000. It consisted not only of infantry, but also of cavalry, Garrison Artillery, and Engineers, together with detachments of Army Service Corps, Medical Corps, etc. The Active Militia, composed also of all arms, and to serve in which all male inhabitants between the ages of sixteen and eighteen were liable, had a peace establishment of about 68,000 and a war establishment of 105,000. But these figures, as regards the Militia, were in no sense whatever indicative of actual strength. As a fact, the Militia was nothing at the best but a foundation for the creation of an army. For some few years, however, before the outbreak of war, Canada had possessed the nucleus of an army which was gradually becoming a highly organised piece of machinery in accordance with the terms of the Resolution passed at the Colonial Conference in 1907. So, though the Permanent Force was so small in number, and

DEPARTURE OF THE VICTORIAN (B.C.) CONTINGENT.

Not until Britain was plunged in war did the nation realise the full significance and glory of the word Empire. Then, in response to the needs of the Motherland, from every corner of the widely-distributed domain came money, material, and above all—men: loyal sons of Empire from India, Africa, Australia, and Canada.

the Militia nothing more than a skeleton, there was yet in the Dominions the machinery for the creation of a numerous and most effective force. That Canada also possessed the men with the necessary patriotic enthusiasm, without which all this organisation would have been valueless, will appear in the course of this history.

In the Australian Commonwealth, the six States had amalgamated their forces into one Commonwealth Defence Force, governed by the Defence Acts of 1903–1910. Here the system of compulsory service was in vogue. All male inhabitants, with certain exceptions, from twelve to twenty-six years of age, were liable to training, commencing in the earliest years in the Junior Cadets and finishing in the later years in the Citizen Force. Moreover, every male inhabitant not disqualified or exempt by law and who was between the ages of eighteen and sixty years was liable to service within the Commonwealth or her Dependencies. This Commonwealth Defence Force was divided into a Permanent Military Force, a Militia, and Reserve Forces. The Permanent Military Force numbered only about 2,000 altogether, and was made up of officers and men who had enlisted for continuous service for a period of five years. The Militia itself was divided into a Field Force and a Garrison Force. The former had a peace establishment of about 16,000 and a war footing of about 32,000. The Garrison Force, having peace and war establishments of about 9,000 and 16,000 respectively, was destined for the various defended posts in each State, and comprised all arms of the service. The Reserve Forces consisted of members of Rifle Clubs who had taken the oath of allegiance and those who had served in the Active Force or otherwise had been enrolled in the Reserve.

In New Zealand compulsory universal training had been established on the same principle as in the Australian Commonwealth, the ages within which men were liable to serve being from twelve to thirty years. Here there were a Permanent Force numbering about 4,000, a Territorial Force, and a Militia.

In the Union of South Africa every citizen was liable to training in one or other of the forces of the Union, registration being compulsory between the ages of seventeen and twenty-one. These forces were the Permanent Force, a Voluntary Provisional Army, liable for active service anywhere in South Africa or to suppress internal disorder within the Union, 500 strong, the Coast Garrison Force, the Citizen Force, the Royal Naval Volunteer Force, and Special Reserves. The Citizen Force, which consisted of all those liable for service in war who were not members of

any other forces, was divided into an Active Citizen Force, a Citizen Force Reserve, and a National Reserve. The strength of the Active Citizen Force was estimated at 20,000 to 50,000. Every one liable to serve in the Active Citizen Force not so serving was required to enrol for five years as a member of a Rifle Club and undergo a course of training in the use and care of the rifle. These associations were territorially organised to form corps in war time.

Without waiting for war to be declared between Britain and Germany, the Britons beyond the seas began on their own initiative to offer to the Empire their men, money, and material. Directly a state of war had begun to exist between Germany and Russia, these patriotic offers began to be made. In each colony and dependency racial and political differences and rivalries came to an end, sunk in a common desire to aid the Empire. In India independent States joined with British provinces, Maharajahs with Governors, Hindoo with Mahomedan and Parsee, Nationalist with Indifferentist; in Australia and New Zealand labourist joined up with capitalist; in Africa, Boer, Kaffir, and English found themselves together in union with Agriculturist, Miner, and Rand Capitalist; and in Canada the Protectionist sunk his differences with the Free Trader, and the French Canadians, naturalised Germans of the German districts, the Scotch, Irish, Welsh, and English were as one. At home in the United Kingdom there was no surprise at this, for all English, Scotch, Welsh, and Irish were themselves united so spontaneously and enthusiastically that it would have been inconceivable that any other of the peoples living under the protection of the British flag should have lagged behind at this moment of supreme crisis.

At once immense quantities of food stuffs were given by the Colonies to England, in case, because of sudden war, there might be some shortage of colonial produce in the British Isles. A list of the Colonies and their contributions of this character would be too lengthy to insert here.

Canada at once promised to raise 20,000 men for service with the British army, or as the Imperial Government might require, at the same time intimating that later on she would be ready with more men, and that her two cruisers, *Niobe* and *Rainbow*, were then already at the service of the Admiralty. Australia, too, was prepared to send 20,000 men at once, and would place her navy at the disposal of the Admiralty. New Zealand, with equal spirit, contributed her entire naval force and proceeded at once to organise an expeditionary force of 8,000 men, with more to follow later on. South Africa, rising nobly to the occasion, took

upon her shoulders the great and imposing task of the defence of her territory against German aggression, and the primary responsibility for any expedition which might be required against the adjacent German possessions · so the mother-country was relieved of responsibility for the defence of South Africa. Even Newfoundland provided an expeditionary force of her own, more than proportionate to the number of her population. India followed suit.

To this remarkable manifestation of patriotism on the part of his overseas dominions, the King gave formal thanks in the following message to his people across the seas:

> I desire to express to my people of the Overseas Dominions with what appreciation and pride I have received the messages from their respective Governments during the last few days. Those spontaneous assurances of their fullest support recall to me the generous, self-sacrificing help given by them in the past to the Mother-country. I shall be strengthened in the discharge of the great responsibility which rests upon me by the confident belief that in this time of trial my Empire will stand united, calm, resolute, trusting in God.
>
> GEORGE R.I.

Later on his Majesty issued another message of thanks and appreciation to the self-governing dominions.

All this—offers of and preparations for assistance of every kind—was done openly and in the full light of a world-wide publicity. But what followed, particularly in respect to the despatch of the troops from across the seas, was done generally in secret, so that the exact number and character of the forces thus sent to the aid of the United Kingdom, as also the time of their despatch and their destination, should not be known to the enemy. And during the few months which followed the initiation of these expeditions from all quarters of the globe to the field of battle the more remote and smaller countries comprised in the Empire were manifesting like exhibitions of patriotism. The coloured peoples of Africa, from the great peoples in the South to the little tribes elsewhere, as in the West, especially were most anxious to be allowed to go to the front and fight for their white sovereign. Great indeed was their regret that circumstances made it impossible for the Imperial Government to satisfy their ambition. So was it with the Malays on the Pacific coast and the Red Indians in Canada. Unable to fight, as they so earnestly desired, they yet were able to prove their patriotism by contributions of money, in some cases of very great sums.

The Maoris of New Zealand, however, were fortunate in obtaining admission to the fighting ranks of the Empire. It was impossible to refuse them.

In Canada the original 20,000 soon became an intended 100,000 at the least. On October 19 an official statement was given out by the Prime Minister respecting the defence of Canada against any probable raid or attack, and with regard to the organising, training, equipment and dispatch of further expeditionary forces. It was then pointed out that two considerations had been taken into account. First, the provision of rifles, guns, ammunition, and other equipment; and, second, the ability of the British Government to receive further expeditionary forces and give them the necessary final training, having regard to the enormous number of troops then being organised and trained in the British Isles.

The proposal embodied in this statement of October 19 provided for maintaining under arms about 8,000 of the Canadian Militia, employed in garrison and outpost duty. It further provided for the immediate enlistment of 30,000 men, to be trained and sent forward in detachments of not less than 10,000 each, for service at the front. It also provided that, whenever any force was thus dispatched to the British Isles, further enlistment should take place, so that 30,000 men would be continuously under training in Canada, in addition to the 8,000 men doing garrison and outpost duty.

The work of enlistment had been immediately undertaken under the direction of the officers commanding divisions and military districts, and, as had been anticipated, was most successfully carried out. The response had been highly satisfactory, and in many parts of the country men had offered themselves in greater numbers than required at the moment. Meanwhile, communications from the War Office set forth the following desired organisation of the second expeditionary force to be formed out of the men thus under training: Officers and men about 17,000; horses 4,765; field and heavy guns, 58; machine-guns, 16. This force included infantry, artillery, engineers, signal and cyclist companies, army service corps, and field ambulances, with ammunition park, supply column, reserve park, and other line-of-communication units. It was organised as speedily as possible, and two brigades of infantry were ready to go forward at the moment they were required by the War Office.

An arrangement had been made with the War Office by which the purchase of necessary field-guns was to be made by the British Government on behalf of the Canadian Government, so that the batteries of artillery might be effectively constituted. Meantime,

the field-artillery units were being trained with 12-pounders, the type used in the South African War, of which a large number were available in Canada.

The Prime Minister of Canada had many conferences with the Minister of Militia and the Chief of the General Staff respecting an increase in the force under training, the number of men that could be trained usefully in Canada being limited by the following considerations:

1. Provision of necessary accommodation for them during the winter. 2. Provision of arms and equipment. Training for a lengthy period without arms or equipment not being considered very effective. 3. The necessity of organisation by different arms and branches—infantry, cavalry, artillery and engineers, supply, transport, and medical services. A large surplus of some particular arm might be available, but was practically ineffective by itself. 4. The ability of the British Government to receive and finally train expeditionary forces from Canada, in view of their enormous task in training an immense army in the British Isles.

After taking into account all these considerations it was determined that the number of men under training should be increased in the immediate future to 50,000, in addition to the 8,000 men engaged in garrison and outpost duty. Instructions were thereupon given that the additional number thus proposed should be enlisted forthwith.

The Canadian forces thus organised for active service were as follows:

Forces already dispatched (including regiment garrisoning Bermuda) nearly	33,000
Forces engaged in garrison and outpost duty in Canada, about	8,000
Forces under training in Canada	50,000
	91,000

As soon as the second contingent had gone forward a further enlistment of 17,000 men took place, bringing the total up to 108,000.

Thereafter, the forwarding of further expeditionary forces was followed by the enlistment of men to take their place as arranged in the proposals made public on October 19.

In the Western provinces large numbers of men anxious to serve as mounted troops were available. They were excellent riders and good shots, and the Government made special efforts to arrange that their services should be utilised.

In Great Britain, as well as in Canada and all the Dominions, the greatest difficulty in organising the immense forces needed for the war was the provision of arms and equipment on the requisite tremendous scale. These, however, soon began rapidly to be provided, and the Government of Canada co-operated effectively with the Government of Great Britain under well-considered arrangements, so that the resources of the British Isles and of Canada, and all other available resources were utilised in the most efficient manner for the common purpose.

The Canadian force thus raised was made up very largely of men peculiarly suited, either by reason of the conditions of their ordinary life or of actual military and police experience, for a military enterprise of the nature now confronting them. Many of these men had served in the world-famed Mounted Police; many had already gone through the campaign in South Africa; many, in the case of the French Canadians, had served their time in the French army; and all had been accustomed to the vigorous outdoor life of Canada, in the lumber camp, on the prairie, or the railway-cutting. Even the town battalions had been found at manœuvres to be of equal strength to those from the country. In South Africa the Canadians had distinguished themselves throughout the campaign, and particularly at Paardeburg under Lord Roberts. All these men belonged to regiments which were affiliated with British regiments, the following showing how the linking up was arranged:

British Regiment	*Canadian Regiment Affiliated*
The Buffs	2nd Queen's Own Rifles
Lincolnshire Regiment	19th Lincoln
Black Watch	5th Royal Highlanders
Middlesex Regiment	Peterborough Rangers and Wentworth Regiment
K.R.R.C.	Halifax Rifles
Seaforth Highlanders	72nd and 78th Regiments
Gordon Highlanders	48th Highlanders
Cameron Highlanders	79th Cameron
A. & S. Highlanders	91st Highlanders
Royal Munster Fusiliers	101st and 104th Regiments
Rifle Brigade	6th Rifles

In addition, the New Brunswick Hussars were allied to King Edward's Horse.

There was bound, therefore, to be some particularly hearty greetings on the field when the Canadians reached the front, for the 78th Seaforth of Scotland would meet the 78th Picton High-

landers of Nova Scotia; the Camerons of Caledonia would join up in France with the Camerons of Manitoba; and the Lincolns of the two continents would also at some period meet one another.

Directly the Canadian Government took in hand the organisation of these troops, a great central concentration camp was established at Val Cartier. Here the forces were concentrated, the finishing touches given to their training, their equipment completed, and their complete organisation effected. Hence, in the course of about two months, the first contingent of 33,000 men, less the few who were destined for garrison duty in Bermuda, were ready for dispatch to England; and so, in a few weeks, the Canadian Government had assembled and trained over 30,000 men with 7,200 horses, and in such a manner, too, as to call forth from the Duke of Connaught the warmest possible praise of the "work of our boys at Val Cartier."

But, as in the United Kingdom a perfect secrecy had been imposed upon the concentration and dispatch of the British Expeditionary Force to the front, so in Canada the details of these preparations, and particularly the time of the dispatch of the Canadian forces and the port in England at which they were to land, were maintained as a profound secret in Europe. The maintenance of this secrecy was in itself a remarkable triumph for British organisation and self-control. Though in Canada herself all the people knew what was being done, and everything was freely reported and discussed in Parliament, local assemblies, and the newspapers, yet such was the perfection of arrangements that in the United Kingdom and on the Continent and elsewhere in the world no one of the public had any information whatever. For a considerable period of time the whole of the Canadian newspapers were kept out of the British Isles, those interested in the newspapers co-operating heartily with the Government in this effort to prevent the Canadian preparations being too well known in the camp of the enemy. In Canada itself, however, where all knew everything, there was no secrecy and no silence. On the contrary, the whole country was in a state of intense patriotic enthusiasm.

The country was divided into two parties—the soldiers, the heroes; the civilians, the hero-worshippers. One can imagine, therefore, the send-off from Montreal of the Canadian contingent when it embarked upon its voyage across the seas. In nineteen great transport ships—in times of peace the giant boats of the Cunard, White Star, Red Star, and other great steamship lines—did the khaki-clothed multitude embark to be convoyed across the Atlantic by a fleet of British warships. For twenty days did

this voyage of 3,000 miles last, a period of enthralling interest, enthusiasm, and excitement to the voyagers.

This was undoubtedly the greatest trek across the Atlantic that history as yet had known. It was a mighty fleet of transports and convoys extending over a length of eighteen miles!

In the United Kingdom there was only at the best a vague idea that the voyage was now in course of progress, with a still vaguer impression that the port of its disembarkation would be Southampton. But at no time was there in the Mother-country the slightest apprehension that this great fleet would meet with any sort of disaster, however slight, at the hands of the enemy. Never in the history of warfare had there been so perfect an exhibition of the command of the seas as was this voyage. If ever the German navy had an opportunity to strike a blow both at the material and at the prestige of the Allies it certainly now had arisen, but the much-vaunted fleet of Germany preferred to remain in hiding. Nevertheless, the convoying warships were as alert as if the enemy had been equally alert and alive to the occasion. The thousands of Canadian troops on their long line of many transports had always the interesting occupation of watching the warships which were accompanying them—how small cruisers and destroyers ever darted forward into the unseen front on the look-out for any lurking enemy, returning unexpectedly and speedily, such operations as these continually taking place.

In England, though the details of the transport of the Canadian contingent were shrouded in the most profound secrecy, yet by some occult agency some sort of knowledge spread itself throughout the country that, about the middle of September, it would arrive in the Motherland. Southampton was assumed by everybody to be the intended port of disembarkation. The town itself, as a result, began to vibrate with suppressed excitement, and day by day became increasingly crowded by people from all parts of the country who were anxious to witness the arrival of the Canadians, and to give them the heartiest possible welcome. Southhampton, however, was doomed to disappointment.

In the late afternoon of Wednesday the 14th, a few people who happened to be on the Hoe at Plymouth discerned on the horizon what appeared to be the coming of a strange fleet. At once it was concluded that Plymouth was to be the port at which the Canadians would land. The news spread like wildfire through the town. The Hoe, the Devil's Point, Cremyll, Mount Wise, and other places in the neighbourhood became thronged with expectant and enthusiastic crowds. It was, in fact, the transport fleet which was now entering the Sound. The crowds began to

cheer with vigorous voice, the soldiers in the neighbourhood rushing to the waterside, frantically waving caps and rifles. The workers in the dockyards and workshops throughout the town threw down their tools and joined the welcoming throng, and the ships in the harbour and the docks joined in with siren, hooter, and megaphone. In this manner were the brave and patriotic men of Canada received in England, at a place where enthusiasm must have been instinctive on the part of the Britons, for was it not here that, centuries since, when the foundations of the British Empire were being laid, Drake and Hawkins had departed these shores to plant the British flag on the great Western Continent?

The transports, as they entered the harbour, made up a line of over three miles in length—a brilliant and unparalleled spectacle as the night advanced and each of these great ships was lighted up. In the evening disembarkation commenced, concluding at about the same hour on the following day. With remarkable celerity the troops were all brought into line and organised, and proceeded to entrain for the camp which had been prepared for them on Salisbury Plain. In marching through the streets of Plymouth to the trains awaiting them, the Canadians, notwithstanding the heavy rain, were the objects of an almost overpowering popular ovation.

Arriving in course of time at the camp at Salisbury, our colonial contingent settled down to a long period of organisation and training. A noticeable characteristic of the troops, to the conventional Englishman, was the great camaraderie which existed between all ranks—from the Colonel to the private there appeared to be no social or even military distinction as regards rank. In this respect a change was necessary. One of the most important items in their preparation for the front was the introduction of a discipline more conformable to English and continental ideas. It is a very remarkable fact that this discipline was, without difficulty, enforced and developed, so that in a comparatively short period the Canadian trooper was apparently as machinelike in his obedience and formal respect to his superiors as was the English soldier. Still more remarkable was the fact that such a discipline was possible together with the maintenance of the spirit of camaraderie and brotherliness. On the other hand, the Canadian soldier had a greater liberty in some respects now that he was subject to English methods than he had experienced hitherto. For instance, in Canada and until he had settled down in the camp, alcoholic liquor was prohibited. In England the prohibition was removed, and upon each man was imposed instead the fullest personal responsibility for his own behaviour.

There is no doubt that the advent of these troops created a deep impression in England. The people at home were now better able to understand the men of the overseas dominions and their spirit, and, in like manner, the Canadians, French as well as Scotch or English, began to find themselves completely at home in the old country. These troops were as fine material as any general in the world could wish to lead, and they were particularly pleased at the prospect of serving in the very near future under Sir John French, who had already long since won their admiration in the Boer War.

Australia was in no degree behind Canada either in the number or the type of men that she sent to participate in the great war on the side of the Allies. As we have already stated, she offered her services without any request on the part of the British Government before war was actually declared between Britain and Germany. In course of time, when her statesmen had had an opportunity thoroughly to grasp the potentialities of the Australian position, the Government of the Commonwealth, with the unhesitating support of the Opposition, made up its mind that Australia should send 100,000 to 150,000 men to join shoulders with those fighting for the old land. The first expeditionary force which was dispatched from Australia was made up of troops of all arms to the number of 20,338, together with 1,200 armed Reserves. By the end of November another 20,000 men were being steadily and quickly prepared, the larger part of this number being already fit for active service. At the same time, arrangements were so complete that Australia was prepared to dispatch continuously 2,000 men each month to take the place of those whom death, wounds, or other circumstances should force out of the fighting ranks. If all arms and classes of men were counted, Australia found herself, within three months after the commencement of war, in a position to dispose of 165,000 armed men.

As in the case of the transport of the Canadian contingent, so the departure from Australian shores of the Australian Expeditionary Force was shrouded, so far as Europe was concerned, in the most profound secrecy. The original intention of the authorities was that the men of Australia should proceed to England in the first place, as had the Canadian troops, for final training and organisation, with the view to being dispatched thence to the front on the Continent. Circumstances, however, made it necessary that this plan should be abandoned and the Australian troops were accordingly destined for Egypt, with a view to completing their training there and defending that country, and the Suez Canal in particular, from the Turks.

The voyage of the Australians was more exciting than that of the Canadians inasmuch as they passed through waters in the Pacific where a German squadron was operating under Admiral von Spee. In addition to running the danger of collision with this squadron, they were also subject to a possible attack by the *Emden*. As a matter of fact, when about 100 miles from the Keeling Cocos islands, information was received by their convoy that the *Emden* was off those islands, the result being that an Australian battleship proceeded there, and, as recounted in a previous chapter, engaged and destroyed the German cruiser. A still greater danger, perhaps, was to be found in the mines with which part of the route of the transport fleet was known to have been laid by the Germans. However, notwithstanding these dangers, the first Australian contingent eventually reached its destination, subsequently valiantly and successfully to engage in battle in defence of Egypt and the Suez Canal under circumstances told elsewhere.

The New Zealand troops were ready organised, trained, and completely equipped within a month of the outbreak of war, a part of the force being then sent direct to Samoa with the Australian fleet, where they took part in capturing that German colony. The rest of the New Zealand contingent, though originally destined for England, were, like the Australian forces, stopped in Egypt.

In the early days of September the first contingent of the Indian Expeditionary Force of 70,000 men arrived at Marseilles. A month later the Indian cavalry division arrived there. This great force was made up of a selection from the British troops stationed in India, the native Indian army, and the Indian Imperial Service troops, and was under the supreme command of Lieutenant-General Sir James Wilcocks. With him, in addition to British officers, were many Indian Princes and nobles whom the Viceroy of India had selected from the great number who had volunteered for active service, including the chiefs of Jodhpur, Bikanir, Kishengarh, Rutlam, Sachin, and Patiala. Twelve out of the twenty-seven large Indian States had been privileged to contribute some part of their forces to the expedition. The whole force consisted of cavalry, infantry, sappers, transport corps, and camel corps. Not all, however, of the troops which left India arrived at Marseilles, for detachments had been landed in East Africa, Egypt, and the Persian Gulf.

Though the first contingent from India arrived in Europe at the beginning of September, yet it was not until the end of October that any of the Indian troops were engaged in action at the front. For many weeks after their arrival these men, anxious as they

were to get in touch with the enemy, were yet bound to remain in camp for some time, in order to become acclimatised and that the peculiar organisation essential to their well-being and effectiveness should be perfected.

The landing of these Indian troops in France was an episode of remarkable historical importance. Marseilles was certainly accustomed to the presence of coloured forces of the French army, Arabs, Turcos, Senegalese and others, but never yet in the history of European warfare had Indian troops landed in Europe with a view to taking part in European warfare. Associated as India is in the European mind with torrid heat, it was but fitting that the days at the beginning of September when the first contingent disembarked at Marseilles should have been specially favoured with the warm and brilliant rays of the sun of southern France.

An armada of transports in almost interminable line, unexpectedly to the people of Marseilles, steamed silently over the horizon into the harbour and berthed there with remarkable precision and expedition. The word at once went round the city. But the authorities had taken such precautions that no one, unless engaged on recognised business, was allowed anywhere near the quays of the scene of disembarkation. The people had to be content with what already they might have seen in the distance—these ships approaching with their decks packed with humanity for the most part dusky, obviously excitedly and anxiously awaiting the moment when they should step upon French soil, forgetting at length the monotony of the voyage they had just concluded from the East, across the Indian Ocean, up the Red Sea and through the Mediterranean. A camp had already been organised and made ready for them on the heights in the neighbourhood of Marseilles, so the curious and enthusiastic people of the city had to bide their time until the troops marched through the streets before they could see them closely as they so much desired. At length they came from the docks—men, horses, and artillery, all marvellously organised and in order. It seemed almost incredible that only a few hours before these troops had been on board ship, not yet disembarked. For some considerable period of time the people of the city, anticipating the arrival of these troops, had been gathering information more or less accurate as to the classes and castes of which they were composed. Accordingly all were anxious to distinguish the Sikh, the Gurkha, the Punjabi, and the others, the Gurkha already for some reason or other having become the most popular, the Sikh perhaps the next favourite.

At length the interminable procession commenced. Now came

column upon column of Gurkha, Sikh, Punjabi, Dogra, Baluchi, Mahratta, Jat, and others, including British, the latter bronzed through their sojourn in the East as though they themselves were Indian, many in the kilt of the Highlander. One thing that struck the people more than any other was the large number of men of greater age than that accustomed to be seen in continental armies, and who, notwithstanding their grey hairs, yet seemed to have all the strength and vigour of youth. The fact was not appreciated, for it was hardly known, that these men for the most part had been cradled in arms and brought up from infancy in warfare.

We have already in a previous chapter described the landing of the British Expeditionary Force in France and the enthusiasm of the reception of our troops in their march through the town of Boulogne. Marseilles was now just such another scene of martial progress and popular excitement; but on this occasion the pressure of the people on the marching columns was such that they were forced from the centre of the road, doubtless much to their satisfaction, on to the pavement, where, under the awnings over the shops, in welcome shelter from the blazing sun, the troops moved on to their destination.

The Gurkhas were undoubtedly the centre of attraction. The people of Marseilles could not exactly fix their racial identity. Their short stature, their yellowish complexion, the Mongolian character of their physiognomy, their hard and wiry appearance, made it difficult for the people to believe that they were not Japanese. Tremendous interest, too, was taken in their far-famed weapon, the curved, knife-like kukri, which it was believed was never drawn except to shed blood. The people, particularly the women, were so anxious to see this deadly instrument that they even offered their hands and fingers as a sacrifice in order to induce the bold little warriors to produce their weapons. It was rumoured very widely that the Gurkhas succumbed to these inducements, satisfying their honour by merely pricking gently some fair anxious finger. As a fact, however, there was no such necessity to draw blood as a justification for drawing the weapon, and the Gurkhas accordingly were only too pleased to enter into the spirit of the occasion, and, without hurt to any one, exhibit their kukris. The Sikhs and others, whose stature as compared to the Gurkhas and the average European was almost giantesque, were the objects of an ardent and respectful admiration, commanded by their imposing appearance, with their black glossy beards and turbaned heads.

The interest of the people in the kukris of the Gurkhas cannot

be said to have been very embarrassing to the troops concerned; but occasionally the interest of the people showed itself, quite unwittingly, in a manner which obviously nonplussed its objects. Though the flowers and picture post-cards which were showered upon the soldiers were gladly received and appreciated by all, yet the cigarettes, much to the puzzlement of the people, were not always received with any remarkable eagerness. It was an addition to the knowledge of the Marseillaise to learn that the Sikhs were unable to smoke, and so had no desire for tobacco, by reason of their religious prejudices. It is doubtful, however, whether even many cigarettes were lost, for the British soldiers in the progress, as well as many of the Indians, were only too glad to receive and to smoke them.

When the camps were reached and the troops had settled down, then it became apparent how perfect was the organisation. Food, the apparatus and conditions of cooking, water for ablutions, and other details, all had to be arranged in accordance with the many varied religious and tribal peculiarities of these dusky warriors. The Hindoo regarded the cow as sacred, and the Mussulman considered the pig to be unclean food, and, as a consequence, there was no provision of either beef or pork, and great care had to be taken as to a substitute. The only perfect substitute was the goat, and, in order to provide sufficient of that animal for this great host, all Corsica and many out-of-the-way parts of France had to be drawn upon to the utmost of their supply. Fortunately, and quite unexpectedly, the supply was found to be adequate. At first it was thought that Corsica, with its great reputation for innumerable goats, would have become the chief source of supply, but, curiously, it was discovered, when the capabilities of that island came to be tested, that its reputation in this respect was not well founded. So the more distant provinces of France, particularly the Alpine communes, were drawn upon and found to possess the now very necessary animal in quite sufficient abundance. But not all goats were equally acceptable to those for whom they were provided. It was discovered that, tough as the flesh of every goat is, yet the comparatively soft-fleshed she-goat and kid was not quite up to the requirements of the Indians. What they wanted was the good old he-goat, well on in years, muscular and tough as possible. It was a belief among the Indians that by eating this hard, tough meat, preferably a little "high" in flavour, they would imbibe something of the agile nature and hardy strength of the departed animal. Vegetables of a special kind also had to be provided, these having to be brought from across the seas, such as chupattis or puris, which,

spread with dal, a kind of pulse, made a most sustaining dish which the gallant men from India regarded as a special savoury.

In order that these dusky warriors should have no reason whatever for discontent, and that their friends at home should know that they, though in Europe, were yet looked after as well as if still in India, the British Government had been most careful to see that nothing was done which could in any way adversely affect the caste rules or religious principles of the soldiers. In order that there should be no possibility of error in this respect, religious teachers selected by the men themselves had been appointed to each class of caste or religion in every regiment. The Indian soldier, be he Hindoo, Sikh, or Mussulman, is a very religious man, and his loyalty to the British flag is founded very largely upon his religion. One can understand, therefore, how necessary it was that such provision as was made for his reception and maintenance in Europe should not in any way run counter to his prejudices.

The cooking was very largely done either by the soldiers themselves, according to their caste or creed, or by camp-followers of like class and belief. The result was that the camps of the Indians assumed at meal and ablution times an almost gipsy-like appearance. Men would be seen all over the place either watering or leading their mules, posed with much natural dignity in groups before their tents, squatting with bare legs and feet, and little other clothing than a shirt, around pails of water cleaning harness, seated in like manner around holes which they had scooped out of the ridges, and, having filled with wood, had made into ovens, on which they had set pots and pans, cooking over the blazing wood their meals, and crouched in groups or circles kneading bread, baking chupattis, and thrice washing rice. One is not surprised, therefore, to learn that these camps became favourite places of resort for the curious and friendly French, laughing women and girls snapping groups and incidents with their cameras. The men themselves could not at first understand these proceedings of their fair hosts, but in time grew to understand the operation and contentedly co-operate, their pleased interest being developed very largely, no doubt, by the gifts of chocolates, sweets, and other delicacies which they received, and were pleased, when they were left to themselves later on, to eat in intervals between the smoking of their big bubbling pipes.

Before, however, the Indian troops were moved to the front, they were sent from the camps at Marseilles to Orleans, where they remained for a very considerable time. There their acclimatisation and organisation were completed, the town itself through

their presence acquiring an almost oriental appearance. While the people of the town would in usual fashion be marketing in the streets, their attention would be diverted by the unaccustomed sight of an Indian cart being driven past with its little befringed and iron-yoked mules, its Asiatic driver calling to the wayfarers in his way in a strange oriental tongue, or by a Pathan, princely-looking though in fact a private soldier, in his smart turban, cantering by on horseback, riding as though he and his horse were one. A glance through a gateway would perhaps disclose a collection of low dome-roofed mud-huts, where, with ash fires, Indian cooks were making bread. To such scenes as these, with military exercises in the park and an occasional passage of Jodhpur lancers through the streets which gave life and distinction to the town, the people soon accustomed themselves, and when eventually the East departed from Orleans, pleasant memories of its sojourn were left behind.

We shall again meet this great and diverse over-seas contingent, in the latter days of October, in the muddy, cold, and bullet- and shell-infested trenches and lands on the north-west of the left wing of the Allies' front in France and Belgium.

CHAPTER XVI

THE BATTLE OF FLANDERS

The word "battle" now acquires a new meaning—This battle actually comprised two—*The Battle of Calais*—Effort of the Germans to reach the coast—The Belgians inundate their country—Ramscapelle—The charge of the Bengal Lancers—The enemy evacuates the ground between the Yser and the railway—The Allies re-enter the Dixmude district—Fighting around Nieuport—The bombardment of Nieuport—The British monitors off the coast—The scene at Nieuport—The enemy fails to win the battle—*The Battle of Ypres*—The British forces transferred from the Aisne—The British front around Ypres—October 23—The enemy attempts to break through the position of the Allies—Desperate fighting to the south of the Lys—The character of the struggle—Heavy damage inflicted upon enemy—Letters from German soldiers—October 25—The British take up the offensive—Five days of fierce fighting—Persistent efforts round Ypres—October 30—Germans centred on Ypres—The charge of the London Scottish—Ypres spells sacrifice—The aircraft of the Allies—Enemy appreciation of their work—November 1—Renewed attack against Ypres—Continued on the 2nd—The enemy fails—Eight days of comparative quietude—The onslaught of the Pathans—November 11—The enemy renews his attack—He again centres on Ypres—His efforts against our trenches—Fighting at Dixmude—A five days' battle—Death of Lord Roberts—French fête the Belgian King—November 15—The battle ends—The enemy defeated.

THE Battle of Flanders, which lasted from October 20 until November 15, nearly one month, was in fact composed of two distinct battles. The first of these was that which was insistently heralded by the entire German Press as the most important and decisive Battle of Calais, the second being that known to fame, particularly in Britain, as the Battle of Ypres. The Battle of Calais commenced about October 20, ending in the decisive defeat of the Germans on November 1, the Battle of Ypres beginning about October 25 and lasting until the middle of November. The word "battle" had by now quite definitely lost its conventional meaning, for in this war there had already been several periods of conflict in which it was impossible to specify any one particular engagement which possessed the unity of time and locality essential to the idea of a battle. But two engagements, if such they may be termed, during the above-mentioned periods have been, and may still conveniently be, called battles. These are the two the subject of this chapter.

The two battles were initiated by two German attacks which were conducted strategically and tactically with remarkable energy. Without doubt the Germans intended that these two battles, or one of them, should be decisive. The Emperor himself

was at Thielt and Courtrai with the idea of exalting by his presence the ardour of his troops. The Crown Prince of Bavaria had issued a Proclamation in which he exhorted his soldiers " to make the decisive effort against the French left wing," and " to settle thus the fate of the great battle which has lasted for weeks." Another Army Order issued by the Bavarian Commander declared that his troops had been fighting under very difficult conditions, " but it is our business now to let the struggle with our most detested enemy drag on no longer. . . . The decisive blow is still to be struck."

Events in Poland alone rendered it necessary that the enemy should make great and desperate efforts to obtain a decision in the western theatre of operations. At all costs the Germans were determined to pierce or drive in the Allies' west or left wing. Their intention was to break our left and thus reach Calais, and to cut it in half and thus to carry Ypres, or at least to effect one of these objects; effecting either would enable him to capture Dunkirk, then Calais and Boulogne.

In the Battle of Calais the German attack was opposed mainly by the Belgians. On October 25 the Belgian army held the line from Nieuport along the railway to Dixmude, being strengthened by a French Division. Dixmude itself was occupied by a force of French Marine Infantry. From the 25th to 29th these combined forces developed magnificent resistance against an enemy superior in number and powerfully backed by heavy artillery. On the 21st the country to the north-east of the railway line had been flooded by the Allies, the inundations gradually spreading along their whole front over an area extending backwards across the course of the Yser River as far as St. Pierre Capelle.

These inundations had so great an effect upon the strategy of the campaign, in arresting the march of the Germans upon Dunkirk and Calais, that a word about the intricate system of dykes and locks which controls them may be of interest. All this region, like Holland, had in the course of centuries been reclaimed step by step from the sea. The average level of the plain was about two feet below sea level at high tide. The passages, however, by which the sea could enter this plain were limited, for all along the sea-coast was a barrier of dunes which, as the sand blown by the north-west winds accumulated, were continually encroaching upon the low-lying country inland. This line of dunes was only broken here and there by a few streams flowing through them. The mouths of these streams were closed by locks preventing the entry of the sea at high tide and enabling them to discharge their waters at low tide. By this means the whole

country had been gradually drained between the Yser and the Aa Rivers, for the rivers and streams were connected by a perfect network of canals and ditches. In order to inundate the country it was only necessary to open the locks at high tide. That part of the proceeding was simple enough, but as a matter of fact the scientific inundation of the exact extent of the country which it was desired to render impassable to the enemy involved a high degree of skill and local knowledge in the manipulation of the locks with reference to the varying factors of tide and wind, and in the opening of particular dykes to flood certain areas. It was an art possessed in its perfection by only a few old watermen, and it was said that it was due to the knowledge and experience of one of them in particular that the Belgians were enabled to flood the German trenches while still keeping the water out of their own.

During these five days of fighting the enemy had been fortunate enough to occupy Ramscapelle, but on the 30th our Allies were able to recapture the place, that being the only point on the railway the Belgians had lost. Here we first meet with our Indian contingent in something in the nature of that fierce hand-to-hand fighting to which, in its experience of Indian frontier warfare, it had always been so accustomed.

The Belgians who fought at Ramscapelle [wrote a correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*] still speak of the famous charge of the Bengal Lancers on October 29. The Germans had prepared their attack upon the little village, as usual, by a furious artillery fire. The Belgians held their ground all night, but in the morning the Germans seemed to be coming on in ever-increasing numbers. The attack was spread over a distance of three or four miles. The enemy crept along by ditches and hedges, and returned to the charge a dozen times. There were fierce man-to-man encounters, and as the Belgians retreated slowly they left the ditches filled with German dead. Numbers told, however, and the village was partly occupied by the enemy. Suddenly assistance came. The Bengal Lancers had been sent to help the Belgians, who had been fighting fourteen hours. The Lancers dismounted, and in the face of a fierce rifle fire dislodged the enemy, taking house after house, and smashing in doors and windows to get at the German Marines, who had been called from Hamburg as a last hope of the German army. Twelve guns were taken—some tell me twenty—and more than 1,000 prisoners.

On November 1 and 2 the enemy bombarded Furnes, but began to show signs of weariness. On the 2nd he evacuated the ground between the Yser and the railway, abandoning cannon, dead, and wounded. On the 3rd the troops of our Allies were able to re-enter the Dixmude district,

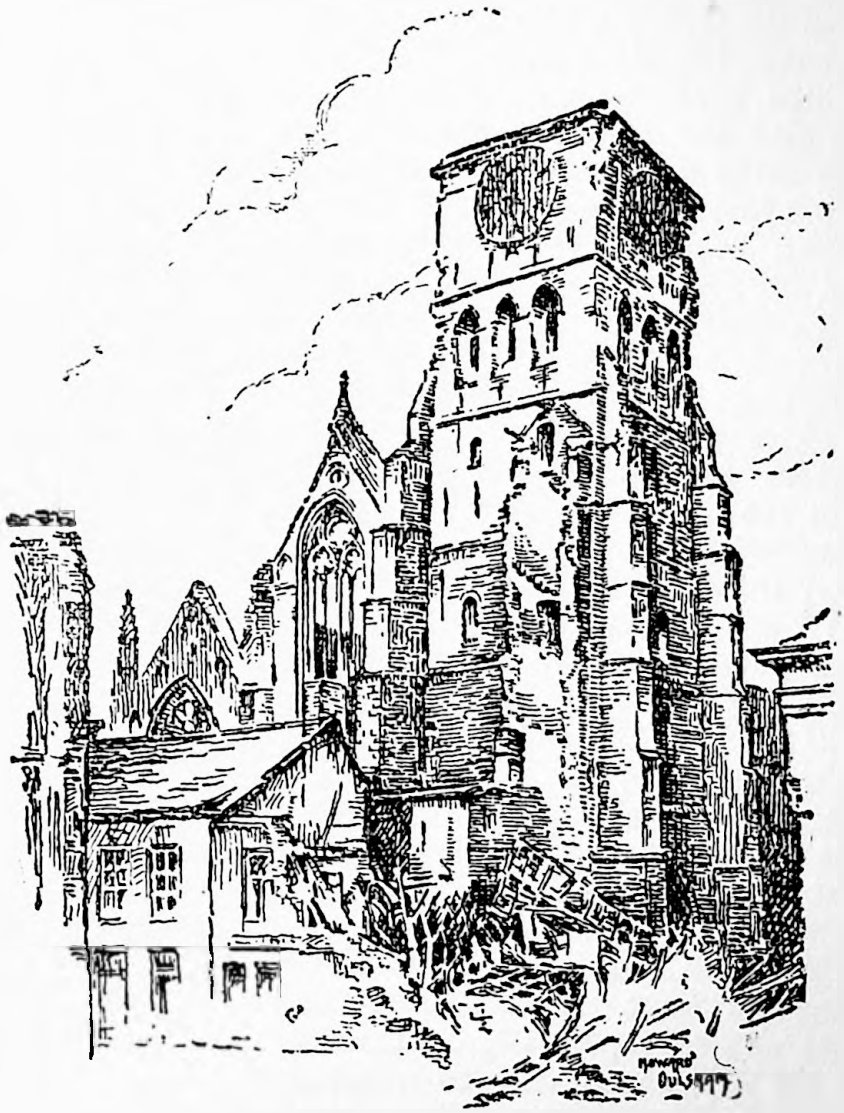
Though having thus occupied the neighbourhood of Dixmude, it was impossible to turn the enemy out of the town itself; but the net result of the operations of the Allies in this district was such that the Germans could not debouch from the town, and so, in taking it, had achieved but a fruitless success.

Thus this determined endeavour on the part of the Germans to gain the coast was successfully resisted on the line between Nieuport and Dixmude. The Germans were truly and decisively defeated, and their furious offensive war was once again to be converted—to their utter disgust—into a defensive one. German officers who were captured by the Allies did not attempt to hide their disappointment; with savage hate they boasted of their original intention to carry the German flag as far as the maritime towns of Calais, Dunkirk, and Boulogne, and raise it in defiance opposite the shores of England, and declared that nothing the Allies could do could protect these towns from ultimate occupation by the Kaiser.

As above described, this Battle of Calais would seem to have been eventless and fruitless. It was nothing of the kind, however. For a week, day and night, a fierce battle was being waged, its fortunes continuously swaying backwards and forwards. Though the area of the fighting was comparatively extensive, yet some of the most desperate incidents would arise out of the disputed possession of but a few yards of territory. For example, early in the battle the Germans managed to cross the River Yser at a point near Pervyse, and though they were opposed and attacked by the Belgians with desperate and gallant effort, yet they could not be entirely thrown back—they were on a small strip of ground in the bend of the river from which they could not be dislodged. The Belgians kept up a persistent hail of shrapnel on this spot, destroying absolutely all the German soldiery there. At once the place of the dead was occupied by another force of Germans who met the same fate as their predecessors; again the place of the dead would be filled in the same manner; yet again the fate of the last comers would be the same as those whose place they had filled. It mattered not, apparently, how many of the enemy were killed, for their numbers seemed inexhaustible. All this indicates how gallantly the Belgians must have fought throughout this line in order to prevent the enemy breaking through it.

Before the town of Dixmude could be occupied by the enemy the French marines who were in possession manfully withstood a cannonading by the Germans which lasted continuously for forty-eight hours, reducing the town to a state of complete ruin. This

was followed up by a bayonet onslaught carried out by an innumerable horde of the enemy. Only when there was practically none of the French alive were the Germans able to settle down in the town, or rather in its blazing ruins, the red flames of which could be seen twenty miles away in the darkness of the night. As



THE RUINED CHURCH OF ST. JEAN, DIXMUDE.

we have already seen, this great effort of the Germans amounted in the end to nothing substantial, inasmuch as the Allies were able to maintain their complete command of the district around.

Before the enemy began to attempt to occupy Nieuport a neighbouring village became the centre of a remarkably desperate struggle. Time after time this village was taken and retaken,

until eventually its streets were deep with one great extensive heap of dead and dying soldiers.

At Nieuport the French and Belgians held the town in spite of a terrible bombardment not only of the town itself, but of the Allies' trenches behind. Here, however, the Allies had the very material assistance of the British and the French warships, who bombarded the enemy's batteries and so kept them not only away from the coast, but from a too effective attack on the town.

The ships, however, were not quite so useful as the howitzer gunboats. At the time the war broke out the Brazilian Government had three gunboats, or monitors, lying in England, their construction just completed, ready to steam to Brazil. The British Government, seizing the opportunity, immediately purchased them, and for some time there was considerable speculation as to the uses to which they would be put. These gunboats, though heavily armed and well protected, had a remarkably light draught, being designed to operate either close in to a very shallow coast or at a place which could be reached only by river or canal. In this great war they had hitherto been met with only on the Danube in the operations between Austria and Servia. Hugging closely the Belgian coast, the three monitors brought their guns to bear on the German trenches, materially assisting the allied troops in carrying them, and preventing the Germans making good their advance upon Nieuport and on the line of the Allies nearest the sea. They were practically impregnable, too, against marine attack, for the enemy warships, being unable to come out of their hiding-place for fear of meeting the British fleet, the Germans could operate against them only with submarines, and these vessels were the ones of all others which because of their light draught had no fear of the torpedo.

The object of the two opposing armies in extending their lines toward the coast was, as already stated, to prevent either side outflanking the other. With regard, however, to the German lines this object was only partially attained by reaching the sea, inasmuch as the Allies were able to bring these monitors so close to the shore as to be able to shell the extreme right of the German line. The Allies were thus able to attack the German right flank. There is no doubt that this attack from the sea contributed very materially to the failure of the Germans to occupy the coast around Dunkirk and Calais.

Nieuport suffered horribly, being subjected for some considerable time to a terrible bombardment from heavy howitzers and shrapnel, the shells following in a never-ending stream, searching every street and doing vast damage. The following is

from an account given by Mr. Ashmead Bartlett in the *Daily Telegraph* of some part of the fight :

The town is a network of bridges over the various branches and mouths of the Yser. The German artillery concentrated its fire on any motor-cars attempting to cross. It was reported that a number of French wounded were in a field hospital across the bridges, but all attempts to bring them in had to be abandoned for the time being. The streets of the town had been barricaded to resist attack, and it was slow and difficult work guiding the motors amidst these barricades, fallen-down houses, and shell-holes. The bombardment still continued, but it was of more desultory nature, and, by exercising due caution, several journeys were successfully made with the wounded.

Throughout the afternoon numbers of wounded began coming in from the front. Their accounts of what was taking place varied even more than is usual, on account of the difficulty of seeing more than a few hundred yards in any direction. The French wounded who came in from the direction of the coast said that the day was going well, and that Westende would shortly be occupied. On the other hand, the Belgian wounded, who came in from the direction of St. George, declared that the Germans were in overwhelming strength, and that their artillery fire was terrible. Indeed, from this side the firing was tremendous throughout the afternoon. There seemed no cessation to the continuous roar of the guns through the mist.

About five o'clock the situation had changed for the worse. The road leading to the town was blocked by a crowd of wounded and fugitives, who had been forced by the severity of the German fire to leave their badly constructed entrenchments. For six days these men had gallantly held the position, and during this time their losses had been very heavy.

Now had come the moment when human nature could stand no more of this continuous strain. Two batteries of artillery also retreated, and several machine-gun sections. The retirement became perfectly orderly directly the outskirts of the town were reached, and the units were rapidly rallied.

About 5.30 the Germans began again to shell Nieuport. Many of the inhabitants had ventured forth from their cellars owing to the cessation of the bombardment and were caught before they could reach shelter again. Several were killed and others wounded. A priest told me that two wounded women were lying in a certain house, and asked me to find an ambulance to take them away. I shall never forget that scene. I went down a narrow flight of steps leading to the cellar, and there, in a low-vaulted room about 10 ft. square, I found eighteen men, women, and children huddled together, frightened out of their wits, and without food for two days.

In the centre of the floor on mattresses lay the victims of this atrocious system of bombardment and destroying towns, irrespective of whether they are fortified or not. A woman of mature age was sitting with three fingers shot off by the fragment of a shell. By her side lay her daughter, a girl of fifteen, with one leg completely smashed to bits by a bigger fragment of the same shell. They had gone outside the house for a few minutes

that afternoon, and one of the heavy German howitzer shells had burst within a few yards of their front door. Neither had had their wounds dressed, and they would have lain there until the girl died had not the priest come to us for assistance. With considerable difficulty we got them both into an ambulance, and they were taken back to Furnes, where the young girl had her leg amputated the same evening.

In the afternoon I saw an interesting attempt on the part of the German gunners to bring down a French aeroplane which was scouting over their lines. The German field guns, which had been bombarding Nieuport, turned their attention to this aeroplane, and for several minutes it was surrounded by bursting shrapnel. Most of them were far away, nearly always behind the tail of the machine, which glided gracefully on its way, until the gunners gave up their work in despair.

The Germans have made no progress, and have only succeeded in passing the Yser in small numbers, which have been easily dealt with by the Belgian and French artillery.

We must now turn to the second battle, that of Ypres. This battle was initiated by an attack of the enemy which was intended originally as a support, and subsequently as a renewal, to the south, of the effort which he was making—ultimately, however, to be shattered—in the north, on the line Nieuport to Dixmude. It was an effort not like that to the north, directed towards turning the flank of the Allies on the coast, but one whose object was to drive in the right of the Allies' northern army on the more southern part of their line, of which Ypres was the strategical centre, by a violent overwhelming attack of powerful masses of troops. Quite apart from any other consideration this attack was of much greater importance to the enemy than the other in view of the great numbers of men who were engaged in it. It was estimated that the Germans brought three-quarters of a million men into the field. And the severity and intensity of the operations during the three weeks of their duration can be judged from the fact that in the end the Germans suffered the frightful loss of about 150,000 men; 40,000 of their abandoned dead were counted by the Allies on the field. Trainload upon trainload of bodies, packed in quicklime, had then already been hurried from the scene of carnage by the German authorities to be burned in monster pyres in the interior.

In the operations already described between Nieuport and Dixmude the Allies were represented by the French and Belgians, though mainly the latter, except as regards the naval attack for which the British were responsible. But in the operations with which we are now concerned the British and French took the leading part, bearing the brunt of the fight, reinforced at length

by the native and British troops which had been brought to Europe from India. The sudden appearance on the field of these dusky warriors from the East was not only a great surprise to our own men, but an equal shock to the enemy.

Our own army had been brought up to this position from the Aisne as already described under circumstances which were not only a credit to themselves and to their leaders, but which constituted an almost unique movement in the history of warfare. A great force of the British army had been moved through a great distance from one position in the battlefield to another, unknown to, and certainly without being hindered, by the enemy. The difficulty of this operation of withdrawal and transfer can be appreciated when one learns that the position of the Aisne from which the men were moved was oftentimes a line of trenches not more than 150 yards from the trenches of the enemy. The withdrawal, therefore, had to take place as a rule during the night. As fast, too, as our men were withdrawn from the trenches, so these had to be filled by French soldiers. The only comparable operation which before this had taken place was probably that one which took place in the course of the Russo-Japanese War, when, during the Battle of Mukden, General Oku withdrew a portion of his force from the front, moved it northwards behind the line and threw it into the fight again near the extreme left of the Japanese armies. The Japanese force, however, was much smaller than ours, and the distance covered by it was less than that from the Aisne to the Franco-Belgian frontier.

To understand the fighting that was now to take place, it is necessary to make some reference to the topography of the district. The town of Ypres was situated on very low ground. North and north-west lay the flat plain of the Yser valley extending to the sea. To the north-east and south-east there were a series of rolling and fairly well-wooded ridges falling gently down towards the hollow in which the town stood. About four miles due south lay the village of Wytschaete. This village and that of Messines, about one and three-quarters of a mile to the south-south-east of it, were very prominent features in the landscape, for they stood upon a well-defined and isolated ridge dominating the surrounding country. Between this and the rolling wooded district east of Ypres ran the Ypres-Comines Canal, on the south bank of which stood the hill of Hollebecke, with its château. Round this hill the canal took a sharp bend to the south.

The British front along which the German attacks were made may for the purpose of convenience be divided into three sections. Firstly, the area due east of Ypres on both sides of the high-road

to Menin; secondly, the area south-east of the town on both sides of the canal; and thirdly, the Wytschaete-Messines ridge.

This position had been organised by General Bidon on October 18 with French Territorial divisions from Dunkirk, and with forces of cavalry reaching to Roulers and Cortemarck. On the 23rd the position was in the occupation of the Allies, consisting altogether of two British and French army corps, and was intended to be the base of a forward march in the direction of Roulers-Menin.

The Germans in overpowering force and numbers were now approaching with a view to breaking through the position of the Allies. Yet this great effort of the enemy involved by no means the use of all his resources. His immediate object was to attack in great force, and, even though he should fail, to occupy the attention and forces of the Allies until he could bring up yet still greater and more powerful masses of troops. As a fact the Germans were then raising a new army consisting of corps formed of volunteers, and other material which had not yet been drawn upon, together with a considerable number of heavy guns.

In face of this powerful opposition the Allies, thanks to skilful generalship and a gallant and resourceful rank and file, were able to progress along the line Poelcapelle-Passchendaele-Zandvorde-Gheluvelt. But their progress was there soon brought to a standstill.

Four days later, from October 20 to 24, the opposing armies were engaged in a violent and continuous fight. On the 25th the reinforcements of the Germans had arrived, and a yet more strenuous and deadly fight ensued.

On Wednesday, the 21st, the fighting, though vigorous along the line, was particularly fierce to the south of the River Lys. There was, too, a fiercely contested action near La Gheir. The Germans swarmed around in solid hordes, but only to be swept away by our fire. One of their battalions was practically wiped out, some 400 of its dead being picked up by the British. In our lines alone many of the enemy were taken prisoners, and also some guns were taken. Over the whole field in this area the total of enemy casualties, for the one day, was probably about 6,000.

The events of this and the succeeding days—if they were susceptible of adequate description—would form one of the most glorious chapters in British military history. It was only by a remarkable dogged pluck and by universal individual acts of gallantry and devotion that our men were able to withstand the onslaught of their outnumbering enemy. As the struggle swayed backwards and forwards through wood and

hamlet the fighting assumed a most confused and desperate character. Units became inextricably mixed, and in many cases, in order to strengthen some threatened point or to fill a gap in the line, officers had to collect and throw into the fight what men they could, regardless of the units to which they belonged. In one trench a subaltern was perhaps in charge of a detachment composed of Scotch, Irish, and English regiments. Here, a brigadier commanded a few companies. There, another was seen in control of a division. One officer of that rank at one time had thirteen battalions under his command, which were much below strength owing to casualties and the disintegration inseparable from hand-to-hand fighting.

The description of the actual fighting for this day would serve equally well for any other day of normal conflict during the continuation of this battle. The fighting centred always around some wood or village or line of trenches, and friend and foe would, during the whole time, be so closely and confusedly mixed up that the battle itself would be nothing but a great number of comparatively small but terribly deadly struggles, as "Eye-Witness" illustrates it, for the attainment of apparently insignificant objectives—"it may be a mound here, a house there, perhaps only a brickstack or a heap of ruins which was once a cottage, but each one of these points, round which a desperate strife is waged from time to time, may make the whole difference to the security of some part of the line or may just afford us the means of placing the enemy at a disadvantage." Those localities which had continually been taken and retaken, such, for instance, as certain now famous brickfields in the neighbourhood, presented the strangest possible appearance. It would be difficult to distinguish a church from a stable or a pit-head—each would be equally unrecognisable in its awful ruin.

Then, for several hundred yards to the rear of the front trenches there was not only, needless to say, no living thing above ground, but there was not even a single object left standing which had not been shattered in some way or other. Of the houses in the neighbouring village some may have retained their walls, full of great irregular rents, but of the roofs only a few rafters would remain, with perhaps some tiles or slates still hanging from them and clattering down every now and then on to the roadway. A more pretentious house than the rest, evidently selected as a target, would have its whole front shot away, the church would be gutted, only one forlorn and battered saint looking down upon the ruins; even the trees were torn to pieces by the iron hail, branches shorn off, and the trunks scored with the marks

of shrapnel. One tree was found with a whole unexploded shell still sticking in it. All the ground near the front line was ploughed up with shells, and furrowed with the remains of old trenches and graves. The whole place had become a vast cemetery in which our trenches and those of the enemy wound their sinuous ways in every direction. In a sheltered spot there might be a little graveyard where some of our own dead had been buried, their graves carefully marked, and a rough square of bricks placed round them. In front of the trenches the German corpses still lay thick.

At one part of the brickfields above referred to some thirty of the enemy tried to rush our line. At their head was a young officer, who came on gallantly waving his sword. He almost reached the barbed wire and then fell dead, and he probably lies there still with his sword in his hand and all his thirty men round him. It would be the same all along the front in this quarter; everywhere the still grey figures of the German dead were to be seen lying, sometimes close together, sometimes singly, or in twos and threes.

The days of the 22nd and 23rd passed in very much the same manner, and with like awful results, the Germans advancing in overwhelming force, only to be repulsed by our men, often again advancing in yet greater force, to be yet again repulsed, their efforts, however, not under any circumstances succeeding so far as to throw us back or to break through our line. Amid the thunder of their guns, shells were flying, dealing destruction and death on each side. At close range all over the fighting area, bodies of the opposing armies were firing upon one another with rifles and Maxims, causing terrible havoc in the solid masses of the opposing force; and desperate assaults with rifle, bayonet, and grenade were constantly being made on our trenches.

There was soldiery everywhere. As the enemy fell back they would be subjected to a shower of shrapnel from our side and would seek shelter in some village or building, from which, later, being destroyed by some high-explosive shell, they would be forced out, only to meet inevitable death by the dread shrapnel. The idea of the enemy seemed to be that by pouring mass upon mass of men upon our ranks, without apparently any sort of limit, he would be able eventually—cost what it might in human destruction—to wipe out our defence. In the end he would fail, the almost universal death of his men accompanying his failure, and yet he would continue, and did in fact continue to fight for many days, always in this same fashion. So one can imagine at what cost the Allies were able to defend their position. Though the Germans suffered death by the tens of thousands, and though

THE TAKING OF LANDRECIES.

The villages along the banks of the Aisne, the Marne, and the Meuse were practically taken at the point of the bayonet; every house was a fort, and there was much fierce and desperate fighting, and hand-to-hand encounters. In the taking of Landrecies the Grenadier Guards added yet another name to their glorious record.

their tale of casualties was far in excess of ours, yet necessarily the Allies themselves were bound to suffer very heavily.

On the 24th the tale is the same. What that day meant to the men engaged, whether on one side or on the other, is apparent from a letter of a German soldier which was subsequently discovered on his dead body :

On October 24 we were ordered to be ready for an assault before dawn. We had hardly advanced 500 yards when we were met by a terrific shell fire from the English. When we were collected again I found what an awful disaster had overtaken us. Of our battalion scarcely eighty men came through.

The following is another letter of a German soldier :

The enemy shelled us so heavily all day that Lieutenant B. gave the order to retire at 4 p.m., and we lost touch of the other companies. We retreated under terrible rifle and shell fire, and had hardly arrived under cover when our captain drove us out again to our old position. The fire was so heavy on our return that I was surprised that we got there at all; it was so terrible that one could imagine hell had opened up and was pouring fire out of a thousand craters. I spent the most terrible hours of my life that day. The awful bombardment continued, our artillery not being able to give us any protection. At noon the next day we were forced to retire. This movement took place under still heavier artillery and machine-gun fire. How I survived is a wonder.

On this day the offensive of the Germans became increasingly powerful and effective. Three separate attempts they made upon our men near Armentières, though without success, another violent effort being made farther to our left, this, too, being a failure.

The following day, Sunday the 25th, it was no longer a question on the part of the British of withstanding the German attack, but of themselves taking up the offensive against the enemy. On our left towards Ypres we were not only able to advance and gain some ground, but took eighty prisoners and two guns. Elsewhere throughout our lines we captured by the close of the day over 200 German prisoners.

Now followed for five days, from October 26 to 30, a most severe and sanguinary struggle, culminating with a final and decisive victory over the enemy on October 31 and November 1.

On the 26th, the enemy, having brought up many more men and guns, their artillery being reinforced with that which the fall of Antwerp had released, concentrated an enormous mass of forces against us in the neighbourhood of Ypres. There, supported by their artillery, the Germans made a violent endeavour to hack,

or rather to blast and hack, a way through our ranks. They seemed determined at any cost to gain the town. The day closed, however, without the attainment by them of their object.

On the following day the whole of our lines from Neuve Chapelle in the south up to Ypres were constantly engaged. At Ypres, to the east of the town, the enemy was developing a very strong and desperate attack. Farther south, to the north of the River Lys, he maintained a continuous and deadly bombardment directed against our lines. To the south his efforts were directed towards the occupation of Neuve Chapelle. Near Ypres, notwithstanding the deadly rain of shells to which our men were subjected, the German effort was completely checked, a check which was followed by a substantial advance. In the centre, too, we made some advance, notwithstanding the bombardment. In the south, near Neuve Chapelle, in a fight which there took place in a wood, the Germans were able to dislodge us from some part of it. The net result of the day's operations was very considerably in favour of the Allies.

On the following day the enemy abandoned for the time his efforts in the neighbourhood of Ypres. He now centred his efforts in an attack upon our lines just north of the Lys and south of that river in the neighbourhood of Neuve Chapelle. North of the river, the enemy was unable to make any advance. To the south of Neuve Chapelle the fortune of battle was swaying throughout the whole day. The enemy was determined to gain possession of the village. Attack upon attack was made upon Neuve Chapelle, each time to be repulsed, though on each occasion the enemy was hurled against the place in increasing force. The village itself became a ghastly scene of destruction and death. In the streets and in the very houses themselves there was constant and desperate hand-to-hand fighting with rifle and bayonet. The houses and other buildings were all in ruins as the result of the enemy's shells.

So the Germans occupied Neuve Chapelle. The Allies, however, could not let matters remain thus. They gathered themselves together once again and delivered a desperate attack upon the village, with the idea of forcing, if possible, the Germans out. Once again on this day, in the late afternoon, Neuve Chapelle became the scene of a murderous conflict. The British had made up their minds that, happen what might, the village should be reoccupied by the Allies. With a desperate vigour, and with an absolute disregard for their own safety, careless entirely whether they met death or not, they fought the outnumbering horde, and their courage had its reward. The effect of their onslaught, with

its incidental rifle and gun fire, was more than stupendous. The Germans, notwithstanding their greatly superior numbers, were so decidedly beaten as almost to be annihilated. The streets were strewn with German dead, and, in the enemy trenches around, too, his dead were so great in number that he was forced to cast the bodies out of the trenches and pile them up in front as cover—a ghastly shield. The day closed, but the enemy was still in command of Neuve Chapelle and its neighbourhood, notwithstanding the efforts of the Allies. On the following day the fighting was resumed. Some of our Indian troops were now greatly distinguishing themselves by well-conducted counter-attacks by which they thrust the Germans out of the greater part of the place with the bayonet.

From October 28 to 30 the immediate district of Ypres once more became the scene of a most important part of the great struggle which was now proceeding in this neighbourhood. Individual as well as general initiative and gallantry was, as always had been hitherto in this war, the outstanding feature of the operations. Villages, woods, trenches, and indeed any position which had military significance, were the scenes of sanguinary conflicts in which neither side would give in so long as life remained. Thus, one of our trenches having been carried by the enemy at the close of a great slaughter of the men on either side, that trench was shortly afterwards recovered by us in the face of desperate odds, the Germans suffering casualties, in an operation in respect to a position of only a few yards in extent, of over 200 dead. Another trench, held by fewer than 100 of the enemy, was captured by us at the cost of 70 German dead and 14 of their men as prisoners. One German battalion —and the fate of this would be typical of that of most—was repulsed only after it had left 700 of its men lying dead on the field. Here, too, was experienced for the first time in the northern theatre of war the action of the Minenwerfer, or trench mortar. This engine of destruction had a range of some 500 or 600 yards, and threw a bomb loaded with high explosive weighing up to 200 lb., being fired at extreme elevation from the bottom of a pit in the trench.

On Saturday, October 31, Ypres, which we with the co-operation of the French had managed to retain in the face of desperate odds, once more became the objective of a most determined attack by the enemy. It was on this day and occasion that the London Scottish, with its 1st Battalion, first showed to the world the stuff of which a British Territorial was made.

This battalion, whose men less than four months before had

been occupying positions in offices, warehouses, banks, and other like establishments, in the ordinary civil routine of London life, had been on the Continent since September 16. Until now, however, it had had little opportunity beyond such as was afforded by the everyday work of the trenches—and, God knows, that perhaps was quite enough—to show what they were made of in the hour of great emergency. For the most part they had been doing the labour of a maid-of-all-work to the armies of the Allies, for there was hardly a rough job connected with the operations of the army in which they had not been occupied. Working like slaves throughout the countryside, they had been laying field telegraphs, shunting trucks, unloading big guns, moving and dispatching stores, burying the dead near the firing line, searching the woods for Uhlans, escorting prisoners to the coast, guarding railway stations, doing various repairs with engineering parties, and also working as couriers and interpreters. They had had, however, their full moment or two of glory when on one occasion their E Company, under Captain Lindsay, had the honour of acting as bodyguard to Sir John French on the occasion of his reception by President Poincaré. But perhaps the most interesting occupation during this period, and the one which brought them most in touch with the French, was that which was performed by twenty of their number, all of whom spoke French, who for a time formed part of the military police for Paris, Colonel Malcolm, their commanding officer, being made military commander of Villeneuve St. George, near Paris. Majors B. C. Green and Torrance were the two senior officers under the Colonel. The daily patrol of the London Scottish Military Police became for a time one of the minor enjoyments of the inhabitants of the capital. The men were stationed at various strategic points of the city under the order of the Provost Marshal, and every night these patrols made the round of the principal streets with a view to rounding up and searching out British stragglers, of whom a great number had drifted into Paris in the weeks preceding and following the Battle of the Marne. A patrol would enter all the picture palaces or other places of public amusement on the line of its route, and every British soldier found there, or in the streets, without a proper pass or permit, was either taken back to his unit in the neighbourhood of Paris or brought into headquarters for an inquiry and report. These patrols became quite popular institutions in the city, and were regarded, as they entered the places of amusement, as quite a regular item in the evening's programme, being always received with enthusiastic "Heep-Heeps!" and cheers for Old England.

But to return to Saturday the 31st. The battalion was ordered to take up a section of the firing line at Hollebecke and Messines, between Ypres and Warenton, where the British forces were particularly hard pressed, to support the Cavalry Brigade, which was holding trenches there against an overwhelming attack which the enemy had then just initiated. Only too pleased were the men to leave the town of Ypres and engage in some great adventure. The motors which transported them, London omnibuses chiefly, were consequently crowded with an eager human freight. Having reached the end of their ride the men were formed up under the crest of a hill and then advanced over the hill-crest to their position right in the battle line. Down the slope they boldly, madly rushed, over heavy, sodden ground and cumbering beet-crops, under fierce fire from the enemy's field guns, howitzers, and machine guns. The battalion then reached a point where, because of the deadly hail of shell, further movement forward was impossible. There it maintained itself till dusk, when it proceeded to entrench. From nine o'clock that evening until 2 a.m. on Sunday, continuously throughout that night, the Germans made onslaught upon onslaught on their line, all of which were repulsed by the rifle fire of the ever-wakeful and alert Scots.

At two o'clock in the morning, in the dark hours preceding the dawn, the battalion made its great historic effort, bursting with irresistible daring and tenacity through a very inferno of shot and shell directly towards the advancing foe. In short but persistent rushes they assaulted the front and left of the position of the enemy in great force, and it seemed as though, in such a hell as it was, none could win through alive. Many fell—blinded, deafened, maimed in limb, burnt, and killed outright. As they fell they lay, in ditches and among the beet. But on went the mass of the gallant London Scots; the advance of the enemy must be arrested.

A considerable number succeeded by a *détour* in getting round the flank of the regiment. A large proportion of these were engaged by the companies in support and reserve, while others penetrated between the first and second line of trenches and assailed our firing line in the rear. While fighting with rifle and bayonet was going on both in front and immediately behind the firing line the reserve company still farther behind made repeated bayonet charges against the enemy, who had got round, and so prevented an entire envelopment of the battalion. Behind the firing line the night-black scene of combat was weirdly lighted up by a blazing house which the Germans had set on fire.

At dawn it was discovered that, according to their custom,

large numbers of the enemy had worked round both flanks with machine guns. The enemy, thus pumping fire into their sides, was also advancing directly upon the Scots in overwhelming numbers, with bayonets fixed, firing as they came. It was a terrible moment. But the Scots, heedless of the deadly fire, by which they were almost surrounded, without waiting for the enemy's attack, fixed their bayonets and charged him full in the face as only Scots could. The impact was terrific. Overborne by numbers in front, and ravaged by fire on their flanks, our men recoiled, only, however, to reform and charge again, again, and again. The enemy turned and ran, but, strongly reinforced, he formed again. There was now nothing for it but a retirement on our part; the odds were far too great. Further persistence would have been not only useless, but a wicked waste of valuable life. The retirement was finely carried out. It was effected under a deadly cross-fire from machine guns and rifles.

Naturally in an encounter of this nature the battalion suffered heavy loss, but though unable to maintain its position it acquitted itself with gallantry and coolness in a situation of peculiar difficulty, stemmed the advance of the enemy, and, following the national motto of *Nemo me impune lacessit*, or the motto of a great Highland clan—the Clan Chattan—of "Touch not the cat but a glove," inflicted far more damage to the enemy than it received.

"Our sons will call it Ypres! Well may they call it Ypres!" cried in Celtic ecstasy, with blazing eyes, a Highland sergeant, just released from the trenches—wounded, ragged, and wearied to the bone. The sound of that word, so difficult of pronunciation for the Englishman, and yet so easy for the Highlander, was the sound of the Gaelic word for Sacrifice.

But the occasion was not looked upon as a special one because this battalion acquitted itself so well, for that was regarded as a matter of course; nor because it had done better than the regular battalions, who had been doing as much, if not more, for weeks on end. It was a special event because it formed an epoch in the military history of the British Empire, and marked the first time that a complete unit of our Territorial Army had been thrown into the fight alongside its sister units of the regulars.

On October 31 took place perhaps the most critical movement in the whole of the great battle. Altogether 870 British were wounded; and here it may be mentioned that the British casualties throughout the war until this day were subsequently estimated by the Prime Minister at 157,000. A most important and decisive attack was made by the enemy against the 1st French Corps; the line of the 1st Division along the Menin-Ypres road

was broken; the left of the 7th was exposed and the Scottish Fusiliers were cut off and surrounded. Even the British headquarters were shelled by the enemy, six staff officers being killed there. In the afternoon the British were fortunate in being able to retake Gheluvelt, only, however, to lose it on a later date. The French were obliged to send supports to the British cavalry, and then to the two British corps between which the cavalry formed a connecting link, and finally to intercalate between these two corps a force equivalent to two army corps.

All this day, and indeed throughout the whole time of the fight in this region, the aircraft on both sides were hard at work. On the 10th the British had completed some most successful aeroplane attacks on the airship sheds at Düsseldorf. The enemy itself recognised the importance of these attacks and also, for once, the bravery of the English and French who were engaged in them. The *Cologne Gazette* said of the second and last of these attacks:

> We should like to recognise this piece of bravery of the English or French flier, for it is really a daring act which one must respect. As it was the middle of the afternoon many promenaders saw the machine, although hardly any one imagined it was the enemy's.

The *Rheinische Westfälische Zeitung* said that—

> In attacking the airship shed the flier was exposed to heavy shrapnel and rifle fire. Near the new shed he suddenly dived, so that the spectators thought he was hit. But obviously he had dived to avoid the shrapnel and make more certain of his aim. With one bomb he hit the shed about the middle of the roof. A gigantic burst of flame followed, and there was great smoke for about ten minutes. Externally nothing was to be seen but a large hole.

A French official communiqué asserted that the German cavalry losses were certainly as great as the French, one of the enemy's divisions suffering particularly, "because it was pursued for a whole day by our aviators, who incessantly dropped bombs on it." A letter from a German soldier, published in the *Cologne Gazette*, contained this passage:

> The activity of the Allies' airmen is very great, and, to my regret, very successful, especially as regards directing the fire of the French artillery, which was already very good. If behind our lines reinforcements are coming up, you may be sure that the French airmen will observe the move, and soon afterwards a hail of shells falls on our men. When our engineers select a place for the work of repairs we can always expect with certainty that the French artillery will direct its fire on the spot. At first we thought this

accidental, as the artillery often swept a whole district with a lavish expenditure of shell, but we soon discovered that the French airmen had located our positions with the greatest exactitude. Below the flying machine would suddenly appear a white strip several metres long, which in a short time would disappear. This gave the French artillery our position.

On another occasion the opposing armies had a view of a most exciting encounter in mid-air. A British aviator, on a fast scouting monoplane, sighted a hostile machine. He had two rifles fixed, one on either side of his engine, and at once gave chase, but lost sight of his opponent among some clouds. Soon, however, another machine moved into view, which turned out to be a German Otto biplane, a type of machine which was not nearly so fast as those employed by the British scouts. The officer of the Royal Flying Corps once again started in pursuit. He knew that, owing to the position of the propeller on the hostile machine, he could not be fired at when astern of his opponent. At sixty yards range he fired one rifle without apparent result. Then, as his pace was carrying him ahead of his quarry, he turned round, and again coming to about the same distance behind, emptied his magazine at the German. The latter began at once to descend, as if either he or his machine were hit. Shutting off his engine and gliding, the pursuer recharged his magazine. Unfortunately it jammed, but he managed to insert four cartridges and to fire them at his descending opponent, who disappeared into a bank of cloud with dramatic suddenness. When the British officer emerged below the clouds he could see no sign of the other. He therefore climbed up to an altitude of some 7,000 ft., and came to the conclusion that the German must have come to earth in the French lines.

"Eye-Witness's" dispatch added that the French airmen had been very successful during the previous three days, having dropped several bombs amongst some German cavalry and caused considerable loss and disorder, and having by similar means silenced a battery of field howitzers. The German anti-aircraft guns had been unusually active, from their rate of fire seeming to be nearly automatic, but so far they had not had much effect in reducing the British air reconnaissances. Early one morning a dove-type aeroplane was signalled not far from Paris, but before it reached the suburbs it was chased away by a French aeroplane squadron, the capital continually being patrolled by these machines. It was that day announced that on the roofs of the castle at Potsdam, and on all the important public buildings in Berlin, including the main telegraph office, the Imperial bank,

and the like, machine guns and other anti-aircraft weapons were mounted, together with patrols of soldiers armed with long-range firers, and that all electric flash signs were forbidden in the capital at night. A German dove-type aeroplane flew over Nancy railway station that evening, destroying several cars and telegraph wires and wounding three employees with the bombs it dropped. The aviator also let fall a proclamation to the effect that Nancy would soon be in German hands. As Ostend was in the midst of all the excitement of the moving of the Ministry and staffs by special boat to Havre, at half-past eight that morning a German military biplane flew over the docks at a height of 1,500 ft., but dropped no projectiles, and presently cruised off in the direction of Zeebrugge. One of our men who took part in the defence of Antwerp, interviewed, said, "In addition to their aeroplanes the Germans had a big captive balloon up for observation purposes a great part of the time. That balloon and those in it bore a charmed life. Try as they would, the Belgian gunners could not bring it down." A German dove-type aeroplane flew over Darnetal, near Rouen, dropping a proclamation: "Frenchmen, you are being deceived. The Germans are victorious. Beware of the English and their perfidy."

On Sunday, November 1, the enemy continued his attack with the fullest violence, mainly against our line to the south of Ypres. Such was the force of the onslaught and the weight of artillery supporting it, that our men were temporarily driven back. It was soon resisted, however, and by evening the situation in this quarter was the same as it had been twenty-four hours earlier. That night some shells were thrown into Ypres itself. Farther to the south, the Germans were able to take Messines and Wytschaete, but later on during the same day the British cavalry, working in co-operation with the French, drove them out of the latter place by a brilliant bayonet charge, though they did not, for strategic reasons, occupy it. During the whole of this day these two villages were the centre of a long-drawn-out sanguinary conflict, the Germans attempting from one side to reach and throw back the British lines on the other. The attempt, however, was unsuccessful; the artillery of the Allies mowed the Germans down in great heaps as their massed forces endeavoured to move forward.

On the 2nd there was again a desperate struggle around Ypres, and once more the enemy endeavoured to break our line. At first he was so far successful that we had to go back a short distance, but later on, with the co-operation of the French, we were able to take up again our original position. Perhaps, how-

ever, the greatest efforts of the day were made on the whole line between Ypres and Armentières, with Wytschaete in the centre. Along that line, and particularly in the centre, the enemy did all he could with an overwhelming force of men and artillery to break through or push the line back so that he could insert himself between the two towns in a wedgelike position. Again he was unsuccessful. With Wytschaete in the centre, blazing furiously amidst a hail of shells from both sides, the line maintained its position. South of the River Lys there was also much strenuous fighting, chiefly in the form of a cannonade and rifle attacks upon our trenches. Here, too, the German efforts were foiled.

By this time the first great clash of arms in the Battle of Ypres had come to an end. Not again until the 15th, and a day or so before, was there to be a struggle on such heroic lines. For eight days, from November 3 to 10, the enemy, though maintaining a continuous bombardment, had largely abandoned his efforts, and it seemed that he was for the time being making up his mind as to what course he should pursue in order to gain, if possible, a decisive victory. Whilst so considering the position the Germans expended, with an unbelievable prodigality, an immense amount of ammunition during the course of their bombardment, without, however, advancing their position one step, or even inflicting damage to the Allies at all proportionate to the ammunition spent. Occasionally they made a few local attacks, but these were always and regularly repulsed.

On Thursday, the 5th, the Pathans made a characteristic onslaught on one of the enemy's trenches. Save for the usual enemy bombardment, the enemy's efforts on that day had not been very determined on that section of our front which lay to the south-east of Ypres. The day had passed in comparative quietude. The weather was wet and miserable, and towards the afternoon it began to rain in a heavy downpour, continuing right through the night. Our men in the trenches were nevertheless keenly on the alert, for they knew that when the enemy massed in such great numbers as he then had, something might happen for which they should be well prepared. Keenly looking forward through the rain, our soldiers became conscious of the silent gathering towards their front of a considerable formation of stealthily moving dusky figures which had come up from behind. No word, not even a whisper was to be heard, but under their breath the British in the trenches could not avoid passing the news to one another that " the Indians are going out." With lithe, weird movements like the fabled advances of the Red Indians of the West, the dark

forms were seen to crawl forward serpent-like into the darkness. There was now nothing and nobody for our men to see in front of them, nor was there as yet any sound. Suddenly, however, after a few moments of this perfect quietude, the noise of a few shots was heard, to be followed immediately by a wild splutter of musketry, intermingled with cries and groans, and the scene was lighted up by a number of fire-balls which had been thrown into the air. The troops in the trenches could now, in the fitful light, see in front of them at a distance of about 600 yards; the Pathans could be seen hacking and slaying masses of Germans hardly half-awake, who had been lying in their trenches awaiting an order for a night assault on the British. The Pathans, with oriental agility, had found it possible to surprise the ever-alert German pickets, to slay them at their posts, and to follow on to the enemy's trenches without warning and attack the unprepared foe. The slaughter was terrible, and was only ended by the German remnant tearing madly to its rear. Thus the threatened attack on our trenches had been turned into a complete defeat of the enemy. Satisfied to the full with their work, the Pathans returned to our lines as quietly as they had gone forward, but at a much quicker pace. The Germans now attempted a revenge by maintaining throughout the whole of the night a heavy hail of shrapnel and shell directed upon our trenches. As it happened, however, the fire was so badly directed, aimed recklessly as it was by maddened hands, that it did comparatively no damage whatever.

We now come to Wednesday, November 11. During eight days the Allies had enjoyed a period of comparative freedom from violent attack by the enemy. It was a fact, as had been anticipated, that he had suffered so severely during his five days' fight for Ypres, which had lasted from October 29 to November 2, that he had been forced mainly to mark time—if so we may term the continuous bombardment and the intermittent local attacks of the past eight days—whilst awaiting reinforcements and arranging a re-formation which would enable him to make yet another desperate venture toward the sea through our lines. On the 11th the great struggle was once more renewed, to last for five days, until the 15th, when, notwithstanding the desperate efforts the Germans were to put forth, defeat was again to be their reward. This, the last phase of the Battle of Ypres, determined once for all the superiority of the Allies for at least another six months as an obstacle to the further progress of the German army into this neighbourhood. No doubt the leading idea of the enemy, in fighting the Allies as he had done during the last few days, was

to wear them out and so shatter them that they would be less able than before to resist the intended onslaught. He was to be mistaken.

The key to the situation was the town of Ypres. Once more Germany was to concentrate her forces in an effort to occupy that town.

The morning of the 11th opened with a determined attack by the enemy on our trenches to the north and south of the Menin-Ypres road. This attack took the form of a furious bombardment, the artillery fire of which was heavier and more deadly than any which had been experienced by us during the whole campaign. The men in the trenches found themselves in a perfect hail of shell, continuing for several hours. Then the pick of the German army, the 1st and 4th Brigades of the Guard Corps, made a desperate infantry assault in force on them. These corps had been chosen specially for this work and ordered to carry the trenches or to die in the attempt. They advanced diagonally across the area in front of the trenches; came on with a desperate rush, received by a deadly rifle fire from our men in the trenches; and suffered also from a fire on their flank from rifles, machine guns, and artillery. The greater part of them were dead men before any could reach our line—as a fact, none at all could have reached it had it not been that originally they were so great a mass of men that their momentum itself forced forward those who survived the fire. Thus forced forward, the survivors were able to break through our line in three different places, and, carried forward by their own momentum, they penetrated for some distance into the woods behind the trenches. Here they were thrown back, by the fire of machine guns, to the British trenches, some even occupying some part of them. The only means of estimating the loss suffered by the Germans in this attack is to note that in the wood itself behind our line some 700 bodies were subsequently discovered, and the area in front of the trenches was strewn thickly with their dead. A similar experience was that of our men in the line south-east of Ypres, save that the infantry attack was not so formidable, but against one of the trenches occupied by the French the infantry attack was as violent as that we have just described. In all the woods in the neighbourhood constant fighting of a hand-to-hand description was going on through the whole of this time.

The day closed with the enemy having made no advance whatever and attained no successes at all, unless perhaps it be called a success that a very few of their men were occupying several small points of our trenches, in deadly fear lest they

should be shot by the British—to be taken prisoners they would be only too glad.

At Dixmude—for the battle had now extended right to the north—there was a very fierce struggle during the whole day.

At five o'clock in the morning a great number of German batteries opened fire upon that town. In a semicircle around it there were lines of trenches of the Allies. At the north were the Belgians, with Senegalese on their right and French Marine Infantry on their south, in the most exposed part. A violent cannonading was kept up during the whole of the morning, ending by destroying and setting fire to what yet remained of the buildings in the town. About one o'clock the enemy opened fire upon the trenches. The fighting lasted until the evening, the marines being many times upon the point of being enveloped, and, in spite of an heroic struggle, being overwhelmed by the forces arrayed against them. By night-time, however, they managed to pull themselves together and maintain their position. The struggle also went on inside the town in the midst of blazing and smoking ruins and indescribable carnage, the result being that the Germans continued in possession of Dixmude, unable, however, to debouch upon the right bank of the Yser. Thus Dixmude suffered the same fate as Louvain, Malines, Reims, Arras, and so many other towns. The church, with its clock tower, the town hall and its belfry, and the convent and its old chapel were all in ruins. The bombardment of this unfortunate town, the fighting in its neighbourhood, and oftentimes the struggling in its streets, had lasted since the 16th of the preceding month, during which time the place had been entirely denuded of all its inhabitants. In the place of living beings were now to be found, filling up all the streets, great heaps of unburied dead. The place was actually a cemetery.

According to French reports the many fights around and in Dixmude were the most terrible and sanguinary of the war. Until this date the losses of the Allies, however, were comparatively small, but those of the enemy reached the enormous figure of 75 per cent. of their troops engaged. What made the slaughter of the Germans so great was their method of perpetual reinforcement, a method which made it appear to the Allies that they were fighting an army of men who would rise again and again to fight even after being struck to the earth in death.

On the 12th, fighting continued along the whole length of the line, now seventy miles at least in extent, the day when it closed finding the Allies as firmly established in their position as ever.

Friday, the 13th, was a cold, windy, and very rainy day.

Under such conditions life in the trenches was an abomination, men enjoying only the poor consolation that the enemy was in a worse plight, for the cutting wind was blowing steadily in his face. The first thing in the morning a fierce bombardment of our line to the south of the Menin-Ypres road was made by the enemy. This was followed up by an attack along the whole line around Ypres, the enemy there rushing our trenches, being driven out and repulsed. The town of Ypres itself was again the subject of bombardment, this time being carried on with an ever-increasing fury. Yet again were the efforts of the enemy without fruit. Not only were the Germans unable to advance their position, but to the south of the town an offensive of the British resulted in their sustaining a serious reverse.

On the right, on the night of the 13th–14th, a German trench was taken by a portion of one of our battalions, the occupants being bayoneted or taken prisoners. A part of another battalion which also advanced during the night encountered some of the enemy who were attempting a similar operation. A hand-to-hand fight ensued, in which we came off the victors, killing twenty-five Germans and only losing two ourselves.

Saturday was very cold. There was also some rain. On our left, proceedings were started with the usual heavy shelling, and the Germans again resumed the offensive in the afternoon, south of the Menin-Ypres road, with a similar result to that obtained on the previous day. They penetrated our line at one or two points, but were soon driven out, and the line was almost completely restored. Farther to the south the French made an attack near Wytschaete and gained some ground under cover of a very heavy fire from their guns. In the afternoon our left centre was subjected to shelling alone, and in our centre Armentières was subjected to similar treatment. The town was now practically deserted by its inhabitants.

During the day Bethune was bombarded by the enemy, who continued to devote his attention to towns, villages, and roads in the rear of our line rather than to the trenches themselves.

We now come to Sunday, the 15th, the day which was to see the final failure of the enemy's attempt upon Ypres.

This day, bitterly cold, with the rain falling continuously in torrents—the weather, in fact, about the worst the British army had yet experienced—was the day on which, to the grief of Britain and her Allies, Lord Roberts died suddenly in France, of pneumonia which he had contracted while visiting the Indian troops who were fighting in our ranks. He died, as he would have wished to die, at the old age of eighty-two years, in the midst of battle,

His death was the appropriate crown of a glorious life. Britain had lost in him an ardent patriot and a great soldier, and regretted, in addition to the fact of his death itself, that he had not had the joy of living to see the victory of the armies of the Allies. A day or two afterwards an imposing funeral ceremony took place at St. Omer, where he died, and later on his body was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, in London, in the company of other British heroes.

In France, on this memorable Sunday, another event of profound international interest was taking place. Among the numerous surprises of this war there will not be remarked one which will be regarded as of more lasting importance. The whole body of citizens of a Republic, from the President down to the lowliest, were celebrating with a spontaneous enthusiasm the birthday of a King. That Republic was France, and the King was Albert I of Belgium—a monarch *sans peur et sans reproche*, who was the very incarnation of a violated right and a dismembered Fatherland. History will place him among the most glorious and name him the Great. The town of Havre, the provisional seat of the Belgian Government, was *en fête*; telegrams were exchanged between the President and the King, and a Te Deum was celebrated in the church of the town, representatives of all the Belgian political parties and many French notables attending and taking part in the service.

To return, however, to the field of battle.

The British at dawn, in the midst of a storm of driving snow and sleet, made a brilliant attack upon the Germans to the east of Ypres. Two attempts had to fail before, at the third, the enemy was thrust out of his position, and then at the price of the death of the officer in command of our forces. South-east of Ypres the French also took up the offensive, they in their turn placing the enemy for the time being *hors de combat*. On the left centre and on the right of the British lines there was continuous fighting all day, with the result that our forces were able to establish themselves in, for the time being, impregnable conditions. Farther north, in Belgium, the struggle was limited to the neighbourhood of the Yser Canal; here, too, the Germans could make no advance.

In a report of "Eye-Witness" we obtain some information which came to hand at this time regarding the enemy's methods of sniping and spying upon our dispositions:

> Non-commissioned officers are offered Iron Crosses if they will penetrate our lines at night. Those that attempt this work, having discarded boots,

helmets, and other impediments, crawl as close as possible to our defences and try to attract the attention of one of our sentries by throwing a stone in a direction contrary to that in which they are crawling. This generally causes the neighbouring sentries to fire, thus betraying our positions and that of our line of trenches. These spies or snipers often wear khaki uniform and woollen caps similar to those worn by our men, and thus disguised sometimes succeed in getting right behind our lines to favourable spots from which they shoot men passing to and fro. Many of them speak English well, and display great ingenuity and effrontery in getting out of tight corners.

Another reason for penetrating our lines is the cutting of telephone wires; and behind one section of our front the breaks have of late been very frequent. That the damage has not been entirely due to bursting shells has now been proved by the capture of one of the enemy's secret agents carrying wire-cutter and a rifle. The man was known to have been on intimate terms with the Germans before they retired from the area now occupied by us. He was shot.

So by the 15th the Germans had been finally defeated at Ypres, and their efforts to reach the coast decisively frustrated. The operations of the Allies on the 15th had put the finishing touch to a work which had really been completed on the previous day. On that day the troops of the Allies had again begun to progress, barring the road to Ypres against the German attacks and inflicting on the enemy, who advanced in massed formations, losses which were especially terrible in consequence of the fact that the French and British artillery had crowded nearly 300 guns on to these few kilometres of front. Thus the main mass of the Germans sustained the same defeat as the detachments operating farther to the north along the coast. The support which, according to the idea of the German General Staff, the attack on Ypres was to render to the coastal attack was thus rendered as futile as that attack itself had been.

During the second half of November the enemy, exhausted, and having lost in the Battle of Ypres alone more than 150,000 men, did not attempt to renew his effort, but confined himself to an intermittent cannonade. We, on the contrary, achieved appreciable progress to the north and south of Ypres, and ensured definitively, by a powerful defensive organisation of the position, the inviolability of our front.

CHAPTER XVII

THE COWARD NATION

Germany begins the war by breaking nearly every rule of civilised warfare—Prohibited acts—Proclamation at Visé—General von Bülow's savagery—The world aghast at Germany's enormities—Manifesto of the German universities—German "Kultur" and the morality of war—Germany claims monopoly of ruthlessness—Her cowardly whines when blockaded by the British fleet—Outrages at Orsmael—At Sempst—Devastating the country—Arson—Special firing outfit of the German soldier—The excuses of the invaders—Their methods at Senlis—Sack and pillage—Encouraged by and participated in by the officers—Women come from Germany to assist—The conflagration at Baccarat—The violation of women—Mutilation of children—Massacre of populations—Senlis again.

WE have now seen how Germany, taking both Belgium and France unawares, overran entirely the former country, notwithstanding the resistance opposed to it by the gallant Belgian army, and even advanced into France within a few miles of Paris. In describing the invasion of Belgium, it was impossible to escape reference to the atrocities committed by the German army, acts all the more criminal because they were directed against a people and a country with which Germany never at any time pretended she had a grievance. Quite apart from any natural or general principle of right, Germany, in defiance not only of the old treaty by which the neutrality of Belgium had been created, but also of other treaties, such as the Hague Conventions, to which Germany herself was a party, broke almost every rule of the laws of war as laid down and accepted by all civilised States. One of the most persistent excuses made by Germany for her outrageous violence against Belgium and her people and property was that the Belgian population had opposed her invasion by irregular methods. In making this excuse Germany appears to have disregarded entirely the provision in the Hague Convention that the population of a territory which has not been occupied, who, on the enemy's approach, should spontaneously take up arms to resist the invading troops without having time to organise themselves, is entitled to be regarded as belligerent if the people carry arms openly and respect the laws and customs of war. And almost in every respect possible did Germany violate international law in connection with treatment of prisoners in Belgium. So, too, in

her treatment of the wounded, many of whom in their helpless state were put to death by the German hordes. Amongst prohibited actions was the attack or bombardment by any means of any town, village, house, or buildings which were not defended. The pillage of a town or place, even when taken by assault, was also prohibited. Family honour and rights, individual lives and private property, as well as religious convictions and liberty, were required by law to be respected by the Germans when exercising their military authority over territories they occupied for the time being in Belgium or France. Private property, too, could not be confiscated. Such are a few of the acts which were the subject of well-ascertained and settled law, to which Germany herself had given solemn adhesion in writing, and which Germany did not hesitate to violate. Many more prohibited acts could also be set out.

Apart, however, from these formally constituted rules, one would have expected that a people like the German, who for centuries had boasted a particularly elevated civilisation, would have been the last to have introduced into Europe methods of warfare which until then had been believed by the world either to have been banished altogether from modern practice or relegated unwillingly to barbarous and uncivilised peoples. A reference to the acts of depredation of the German army in the territories already alluded to will show that atrocities which had thitherto been regarded as the worst instances of human savagery had been not only equalled, but exceeded.

Each of the Belgian, French, and British Governments appointed, within the first six months of the war, Commissions to inquire into and report upon these atrocities, and only such acts as have been verified by the reports—the Report of Lord Bryce's Commission is that of the British Government—are referred to in this chapter.

From the very commencement of the war, the various Generals of the German army operating in Belgium and France published proclamations, the object of which appeared in their wording, namely, to create circumstances which might be used as some sort of excuse for atrocities against the unfortunate people of the invaded countries.

The following is a proclamation which was distributed among the inhabitants of Belgium in the neighbourhood of Visé on August 4:

To the Belgian Nation:

I feel the greatest regret that the German troops find themselves obliged to cross the frontier of Belgium. They act according to the dictates

General von Mackensen

General von Kluck

Field-Marshal von Hindenburg

Duke Albrecht of Würtemberg

Field-Marshal von der Goltz

GERMAN GENERALS

of inevitable necessity, Belgian neutrality having been already violated by French officers, who, disguised, crossed Belgian territory in a motor-car in order to penetrate into Germany.

Belgians! It is our greatest wish that means may still be found to avoid war between two peoples which up to the present time have been friends, and formerly even allies. Remember the glorious day of Waterloo, when German arms contributed to found and establish the independence and prosperity of your country.

But we must have free passage. The destruction of bridges, tunnels, and railway lines will have to be regarded as hostile acts.

Belgians, you have to choose.

I hope that the army of the Meuse will not be obliged to fight you. A free passage to attack those who wished to attack us is all we ask.

I give formal guarantees to the Belgian population that it will not have to suffer any of the horrors of war; that we will pay in gold for the food it will be necessary to take in the country; that our soldiers will show themselves the best friends of a people for whom we feel the highest esteem and the greatest sympathy.

It depends on your wisdom and understanding patriotism to avoid for your country the horrors of war.

The General Commanding-in-Chief the Army of the Meuse,
VON EMMICH.

On August 17 a notice was posted in Hasselt, which informed the population that in the case of civilians shooting on the German army a third of the male inhabitants of the town would be shot. This threat was the more reprehensible inasmuch as the Germans had, under the circumstances most improperly, decided to regard the National Guard of Belgium as a civilian force. Moreover, the Germans, on every occasion where they committed some atrocity, attempted to justify it by alleging that the civilians had been guilty of shooting on their troops. So on August 22, General von Bülow, in a proclamation of that date, justified burning down the whole of the town of Andenne and shooting more than two hundred innocent inhabitants, on the ground, which was never substantiated, that the latter had made a treacherous surprise attack on the German troops. The same General, three days afterwards, in a proclamation posted up at Namur, threatened to shoot ten hostages in case of any rising in the streets, and, on August 27, General von Nieber, in a letter sent to the Burgomaster of Wavre, in flagrant violation of international law and all humane principle, threatened to set on fire and destroy the town if payment of an illegal war levy he was demanding was not duly made, and he specifically warned the Burgomaster that in carrying out this threat the innocent would suffer with the guilty without distinction of persons. And so, throughout

Belgium and France, the Germans, as their army progressed, issued proclamation after proclamation threatening death and destruction, always illegally, in the event of any of their requirements being unfulfilled; the invaders never appeared to trouble whether they punished the innocent or the guilty. Thus, on an occasion when Baron von der Goltz issued a notice to ensure the preservation of a railway line and telegraph wires, he threatened that in case the line or wires should be destroyed, then not only in the locality of the place of the destruction, but even in localities nearest where similar acts *might have occurred*, the people would be punished without pity, whether they were accomplices or not.

The time came when the whole world stood aghast at these enormities. But Germany did not hesitate to justify them. She had commenced the war intending, without any sort of concealment, to use methods of frightfulness as part of her proceedings. The following is a manifesto issued in Germany and published to the world by twenty-two of the German universities:

You all know that our army is not an army of mercenaries, that it comprises the whole nation, from the first to the last man, that it is led by the best of our country's sons, that at this hour thousands of professors and students are falling as officers and soldiers on the battlefields of France or Russia. You who have heard and read the spirit in which, and the success with which, our youth is instructed and brought up, who know how much we inculcate respect and admiration for the masterpieces of the human brain, whatever the country to which it belongs—we ask you all to be our witnesses and to say if what our enemies report is true, and if it is correct that the German army is a horde of barbarians and a band of incendiaries who take pleasure in killing innocent persons and destroying villages and the monuments of art and history; and if you will respect the truth you will be convinced with us that where the German troops have had to accomplish work of destruction, they acted according to the pitiless laws of defence in war.

The following extract from a German work on the morality of war is a good sample of the *Kultur* which fills the soul of the German army throughout all its ranks:

Live and let live is no device for an army. Contempt for one's own comrades, for the troops of the enemy, and, above all, fierce contempt for one's own person, are what war demands of every one. Far better is it for an army to be too savage, too cruel, too barbarous, than to possess too much sentimentality and human reasonableness. If the soldier is to be good for anything as a soldier, he must be exactly the opposite of a reasoning and thinking man. The measure of goodness in him is his

possible use in war. War and even peace require of the soldier absolute peculiar standards of morality. The recruit brings with him common moral notions, of which he must seek immediately to get rid. For him, victory, success must be everything. The most barbaric tendencies in men come to life again in war, and for war's uses they are incommensurably good.

This view of the standard of military morality gave a modern emphasis to von Moltke's statement that " the aim of the soldier's life is destruction and nothing but destruction," so there was really no ground for surprise when one found as a result of German invasion a worse than barbarously desolated and ravaged Belgium and north of France.

But what, however, is so remarkable is the idea, which seems to have been prevalent in Germany and amongst the German army and the military authorities, that Germany alone should have the monopoly of the right to deal death and destruction to an enemy. Apparently not even the inevitable and most necessary of the unfortunate incidents of war were allowed to accompany the acts of any belligerent against whom Germany might be opposed. So we find that though Germany did not hesitate in the Franco-Prussian War to besiege Paris with such relentless assiduity that the people of that city were reduced to a state of absolute starvation and misery, in which they had to exist as best they could for many months, yet, as will be seen later, when Germany in this war was threatened by Britain with such a blockade as might perhaps mean some slight restriction of the food supply in Germany, the whole nation, though then its stomach was full, whined and howled throughout the world at what it called the inhuman and unjustifiable action of Great Britain. When the people of Paris were eating rats—outside food-supplies being ruthlessly held up by the enemy—they neither whined, howled, nor complained; they bore their misfortune as bravely as they could, recognising that it was a necessary incident of warfare. When in this war the Belgian civilian population was being massacred and Belgian property ruthlessly destroyed, the people faced their privation stoically and with bravery. So, too, in northern France, when that country was overrun by the German army.

Unless, therefore, we can believe, which would be a difficult task, that Germany regarded herself as having in warfare the monopoly of the right to inflict any sort of injury, we are bound, however much it may be against our inclination, to see in Germany a nation of the most cowardly type imaginable.

To return, however, to our immediate subject.

Enough, perhaps, has been said in an earlier chapter, when recounting the main incidents of the invasion of Belgium, to indicate in general the ruthless methods of the invaders. One must, however, place on record some specific instances. To tell the tale with any degree of completeness would mean allusion once more to the events of Louvain, Aerschot, Visé, Malines, Diest, Tirlemont, and other places. Space, however, will not permit this.

But as an instance of the cruelties which were committed by the invading army, the following will have a melancholy but instructive interest :

At Orsmael and Neerhespen the German cavalry on August 10, 11, and 12 were responsible for the following :

An old man of the latter village had his arm sliced in three longitudinal cuts ; he was then hanged head downwards and burned alive. Young girls were raped, and little children outraged at Orsmael, where several inhabitants suffered mutilations too horrible to describe. A Belgian soldier belonging to a battalion of cyclist carabiniers, who had been wounded and made prisoner, was hanged, while another, who was tending his comrade, was bound to a telegraph pole on the St. Trond road and shot. On Wednesday, August 12, after an engagement at Haelen, Commandant van Damme, so severely wounded that he was lying prone on his back, was finally murdered by German infantry firing their revolvers into his mouth. On Monday, August 9, at Orsmael, the Germans picked up Commandant Knapen, very seriously wounded, propped him up against a tree, and shot him. Finally they hacked his corpse with swords.

In different places, notably at Hollogue-sur-Geer, Barchon, Pontisse, Haelen, and Zelck, German troops fired on doctors, ambulance bearers, ambulances, and ambulance wagons carrying the Red Cross. At Boncelles a body of Germans marched into battle carrying a Belgian flag. On Thursday, August 6, before a fort at Liége, German soldiers continued to fire on a party of Belgian soldiers (who were unarmed and had been surrounded while digging a trench) after these had hoisted the white flag. On the same day at Vottem, near the fort of Loncin, a group of German infantry hoisted the white flag ; and when Belgian soldiers approached to take them prisoners, the Germans suddenly opened fire upon them at close range.

The following instance should also be placed on record :

At Sempst, the bodies of two men were found partially carbonised. One of them had his legs cut off at the knees ; the other had his arms and legs cut off. A workman, whose burnt body

was seen by several witnesses, had been struck several times with bayonets, and then, while still alive, the Germans had poured petroleum over him, and thrown him into a house to which they had set fire. A woman who came out of her house was killed in the same way. A witness, whose evidence was taken by a reliable British subject, declared that he saw on August 26, not far from Malines, during the last Belgian attack, an old man tied by the arms to one of the rafters in the ceiling of his farm. The body was completely carbonised; but the head, arms, and feet were unburnt. Farther on, a child of about fifteen was tied up, the hands behind the back, and the body was completely torn open with bayonet wounds. Numerous corpses of peasants lay on the ground in positions of supplication, their arms lifted and their hands clasped.

Wherever the Germans passed, the country was barbarously devastated. The few inhabitants who remained in the villages told only of the atrocities committed by the enemy. Thus, at Wackerzeel, seven Germans were said to have successively violated a woman, and then to have killed her. In the same village they stripped a young boy to the waist, threatened him with death, holding a revolver to his chest, pricked him with lances, and then chased him into a field and shot at him, without, however, hitting him.

Arson, particularly directed against churches and monuments which had some special interest, either artistic or historical, appears to have been perpetrated by the German soldiery as though they were possessed with a fiendish lust for it; and what made this form of atrocity more remarkable was the fact that it had been regularly prepared for by the German authorities either as a means of systematic devastation or of terrorism. The soldiers carried with them, as part of their regular equipment, a complete outfit comprising torches, grenades, rockets, petroleum, fuse-sticks, and little bags made of compressed powder which were very inflammable. So, equipped with the necessary apparatus, they would raid a village or town and, often compelling the inhabitants to furnish them with matches, faggots, and straw, would place the faggots or straw in or near the house or building, and after that spray them with petrol or naphtha and set them ablaze. One could name hundreds of villages and towns in Belgium and northern France which were thus devastated by fire. Thus at Auve nearly the whole town was destroyed; at Etrepy so many houses were burnt down that 63 families out of 70 were rendered homeless; at Sermaize-les-Bains only about 40 houses out of 900 were allowed to remain; and at

Suippes, a big market town, the whole place was practically burnt out.

All this destruction by arson, which only represented a small proportion of the acts of the same kind in the department of Seine-et-Marne, was accomplished without the least tendency to rebellion or the smallest act of resistance being recorded against the inhabitants of the localities, which were more or less completely destroyed. In some villages the Germans, before setting fire to them, made one of their soldiers fire a shot from his rifle so as to be able to pretend afterwards that the civilian population had attacked them, an allegation which was all the more absurd since at the time when the enemy arrived the only inhabitants left were old men, sick persons, or people absolutely without any means of aggression.

On September 2 the Germans entered Senlis, where they were greeted by rifle fire from African troops. Alleging that they had been fired on by civilians, they set fire to two quarters of the town. One hundred and five houses were burned in the following manner: the Germans marched along the streets in a column; at a whistle from an officer some of them fell out and proceeded to break in the doors of the houses and the shop fronts; then others came along and lighted the fire with grenades and rockets; and patrols who followed them fired incendiary bullets with their rifles into those houses in which the fire was not taking hold fast enough.

Sack and pillage occurred everywhere, not only in the larger Belgian towns already mentioned, but also in France at such places as Nancy and Louisville. It may be stated generally as an undoubted fact that wherever the body of the German army passed, it gave itself up to systematic pillage in the presence of its leaders, who themselves often took part in it. Cellars were emptied to the last bottle, safes gutted, considerable sums of money stolen or extorted, and great quantities of plate, jewellery, pictures, clothing, and all sorts of portable articles, down even to children's toys, were appropriated. All these spoils were loaded on wagons to be taken towards the frontier, or by other means forwarded to Germany. Letters found on the bodies of dead German soldiers, officers and privates equally, proved conclusively that this pillage was encouraged by the military authorities, in order to a very large extent to allow the soldiers to send loot home to their wives and sweethearts, and so, it may be imagined, to keep up the spirits of the people at home. But even the women of Germany came with the soldiers themselves to assist in the thefts. On August 22 the château of Beauzemont was broken

into. On the fifteenth day of its occupation the wives of several German staff officers arrived in motor-cars, and everything that had been stolen from the château, especially plate, hats, silk dresses, was loaded on the cars and transported to Germany. When, later on, the French retook possession of this château, it was discovered to be in a state of disorder and revolting filth.

At Baccarat the enemy did not massacre anybody, but on August 25 they carried out a systematic pillage, and in order to be able to do this undisturbed they ordered the population to assemble at the railway station. The pillage was carried out under the supervision of the officers. Clocks and various articles of furniture and *objets d'art* were carried off; when the inhabitants returned home, they were ordered out again an hour later, and informed that the town was to be burned. Indeed, the centre of the town was ablaze. The conflagration, which was started by torches and pastilles, destroyed 112 houses; only four or five were burned by shells. After the fire sentinels were placed, who prevented the owners from approaching the ruins of their houses, and when the blaze had abated the Germans ransacked the ruins themselves in order to gain access to the cellars. After this operation, General Fabricius, commanding the artillery of the 14th Baden Corps, said to M. Rénaud, the Acting Mayor, "I did not think that Baccarat contained such a quantity of fine wine. We found more than 100,000 bottles." One must, however, add that at the glass works the enemy really displayed a comparative honesty, inasmuch as they only exacted, at the revolver's point, a reduction of 60 to 75 per cent. on the goods which they bought.

But this tale of arson and pillage does not fill up the cup. There yet remains to notice the violation and mutilation of women and children, the wholesale slaughter and massacre of whole populations, old men, women, and children, and individual acts of cold-blooded murder. The following is from the official French Report issued in Paris on December 7, 1914:

On September 4 some German soldiers grossly illtreated Madame X., a wine-shop keeper aged twenty-nine, on the pretence that she was hiding English soldiers. They undressed her and kept her in the middle of them completely naked for one hour and a half, then they tied her to the counter, giving her to understand that they were going to shoot her. They were, however, called out just then, and went away, leaving their victim in charge of an Alsatian soldier, who untied her and restored her to liberty.

Again, on September 4, other soldiers attempted to rape Madame Z., thirty-four years of age, after having sacked her grocery shop. Angered by her resistance, they tried to hang her, but she cut the rope with a knife which was open in her pocket. She was then beaten mercilessly until the

arrival of an officer, who was fetched by a witness of the scene. On the same day, at the hamlet of Marais, in the Commune of Jouy-sur-Morin, the three daughters of Madame X., aged respectively eighteen, fifteen, and thirteen, were with their sick mother, when two German soldiers entered, seized the eldest, dragged her into the next room, and raped her in succession; while one committed his crime the other watched the door and with his weapons kept back the half-maddened mother. At Montmirail a scene of real savagery was enacted. On September 5 a non-commissioned officer flung himself almost naked on the Widow Naudé, on whom he was billeted, and carried her into his room. This woman's father, François Fontaine, rushed up on hearing his daughter's cry. At once fifteen or twenty Germans broke through the door of the house, pushed the old man into the street and shot him without mercy. Little Juliette Naudé opened the window at this moment, and was struck in the stomach by a bullet, which went through her body. The poor child died after twenty-four hours of most dreadful suffering. On September 6, at Champguyon, Madame Louvet was present at the martyrdom of her husband. She saw him in the hands of ten or fifteen soldiers, who were beating him to death before his own house, and ran up and kissed him through the bars of the gate. She was brutally pushed back and fell, while the murderers dragged along the unhappy man covered with blood, begging them to spare his life and protesting that he had done nothing to be treated thus. He was finished off at the end of the village. When his wife found his body it was horribly disfigured. His head was beaten in, one of his eyes hung from the socket, and one of his wrists was broken.

At Senlis, on September 2, a great number of murders were committed, one man being dragged out of his house and killed by a rifle shot in the side; another man being shot full in the chest at the moment he was bringing to the German soldiers some bottles of wine they had demanded; a French wounded soldier was foully tortured by a German officer, who was beating the defenceless half-dead man in the face with a heavy stick. The Mayor was arrested at the Hôtel de Ville on the allegation, against which he protested, that civilians had fired on the German troops. While he was being led away, the secretary of the Mairie joined him near the Hôtel du Grand Cerf, and proposed that he should go and fetch his deputies. "It is useless," he replied, "one victim is enough." The magistrate was taken to Chamont and during the journey was the butt of hateful brutality. His gloves were torn from him and thrown in his face; his stick was taken from him and he was violently beaten with it on the head. Finally, towards eleven o'clock, he was made to appear before three officers. One of them questioned him, persisting in accusing him of having fired or caused others to fire on the Germans, and warned him that he was about to die. M. Odent then went to his fellow-

captives, handed them his papers and money, shook hands with them, and with great dignity made his last adieu. He then returned to the officers. On their order two soldiers dragged him ten metres away, and sent two bullets through his head. The murderers made a little hollow in the ground and flung over the corpse a layer of earth so thin that it did not cover the victim's feet. A few hours before, 200 metres off, six other inhabitants of Senlis—MM. Pommier, Barbier, Aubert, Cottereau, Arthur Rigault, and Dewert—had already been shot and buried. The same evening M. Jeandin, a baker, who had been arrested at three or four o'clock in the afternoon, without any reason, and then taken by the 49th Pomeranian Regiment of Infantry to Villers-Saint-Frambourg, was fastened to a stake in the field and pierced repeatedly with the point of a bayonet.

A volume could be filled with incident after incident of like character to those mentioned in the foregoing tale of foul atrocity. But more than enough has been said, if one wishes to spare the feelings of the reader, to show how low and degraded an enemy the Allies were opposed to. One fact, however, must be insisted on. These atrocities occurred everywhere during the whole course of the German march towards Paris, as a well-designed part of the enemy's system of warfare, and, characteristically of the craven German spirit, they gradually ceased as the German operations became less and less triumphant. The enemy then saw possibilities of reprisals. Cowardly bully, and worse, as he was, fear began to overcome him the very moment he apprehended the near vicinity of men who could defend themselves and their people and property. But the Allies will surely fight cleanly on, and then, in the hour of victory over the Hun, exact one great and all-embracing reprisal.

CHAPTER XVIII

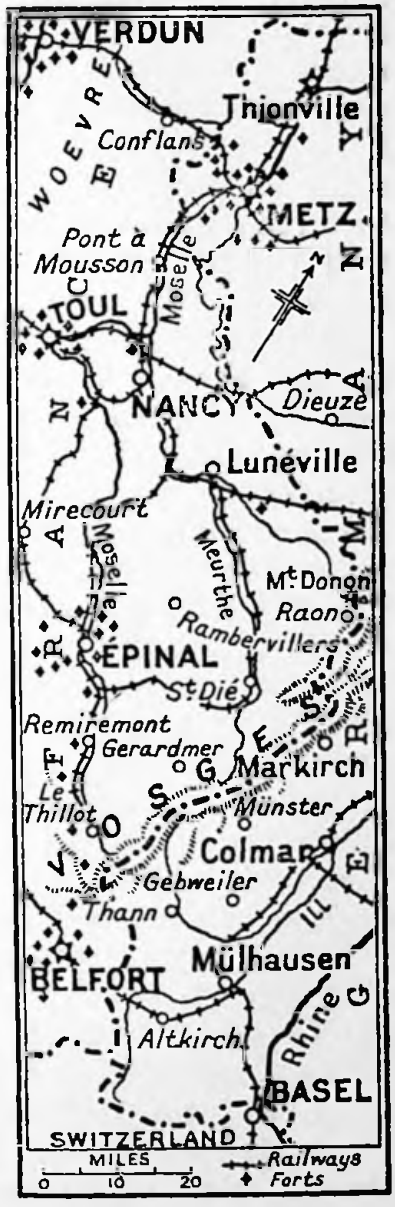
ON THE FRANCO-GERMAN FRONTIER

Importance of the operations on this frontier to the French—The Germans assassinate a French trooper before declaration of war—And repeatedly violate French territory—France avoiding all aggression—August 3—Germany declares war on France—Her reasons—German discourtesy to French Ambassador in Berlin—Alsace-Lorraine an important cause of the war—Eloquent article by M. Maurice Barres—German fear of the French on this frontier—The attack on Longwy—The opening operations of the war—Dash of the French into Alsace—Occupation of Altkirch—Occupation of Mulhouse—Fighting in the Vosges—Germans regain possession of Mulhouse—French hold the country in its vicinity—Fighting along the whole length of the frontier—Its complicated character—Struggle at Mangiennes—Declaration of war against Austria—Renewal of operations in the Vosges—Their importance to the French plans—The Summit of Alsace—And the hills of Bonhomme and St. Marie—Occupation of Saales—Bombardment of Pont-à-Mousson—Constant fighting until the 22nd—Mulhouse reoccupied by the French on the 19th—French threaten the enemy's line of retreat—Germans thrown back across the Rhine—Success of French in Northern Alsace—And Lorraine—They are checked at Sarrebourg and Morhange—Germans now take up the offensive—In two days, though, it passed to the French—The German attack on Nancy—The French success—This fighting was the prelude and the crown of the victories of the Ourcq and the Marne—The Kaiser witnesses his defeat—His humiliating departure from Nancy—The French success at Amance—They again take up the offensive—And for the time being decisively press back the Germans in this region.

SO far we have devoted our attention as regards the operations on land to the fighting which took place in Belgium and the north of France. That precedence should thus have been given to that portion of the area of the almost world-wide war was absolutely fitting, for the war commenced with an offensive on the part of the Germans, and except for some relatively casual irruptions into French territory across the Franco-German frontier the enemy began his assault on Western civilisation by invading Belgium and Luxembourg, and marching through those countries and the north of France towards Paris. The opposition to this invasion was therefore necessarily the subject first to be dealt with, quite apart from the fact—so personal to the Briton—that it was in that part of the war-area that Britain, as regards the security of the British Isles in particular, had the greatest interest. It was there too that the British soldiers were first to be found at their work in Europe.

To a Frenchman, however, the operations on his eastern frontier had from the very commencement of the war a supreme attraction. From Luxembourg down to Switzerland ran the

Franco-German frontier, on the French side protected and dominated by the fortified barrier Verdun-Toul-Epinal-Belfort—the only common frontier between the two enemy nations, and the one which should, had the Germans had any regard for treaty obligations, have been the scene of the initiatory struggle. The Germans, however, had no desire—no doubt wisely from their materialist point of view—to force the decisive issue in that neighbourhood at the commencement of the war.



On Monday, August 3, at a quarter to six in the evening, Germany and France were formally and actually in a state of war with one another; but already, without any declaration of war, Germany had assumed the offensive against her neighbour.

The first victim of this offensive was an unfortunate French cavalryman named Pouget, who met his death at the hands of the enemy during the early morning hours of the 3rd. The incident thus occurred many hours before Germany had declared war against France, and during a period when the French army and France generally were entitled—at least as a matter of form—to regard Germany as a friendly neighbour. For some time past advance bodies of the two armies, German and French, had already been in daily contact on the Franco-German frontier, their association with one another, with the exceptions to be mentioned presently, being generally of a formally friendly character. But on this morning of the 3rd a German patrol advanced across the frontier and rushed a French post of three men, of whom Pouget was one, and then, when only ten yards from the post, opened fire upon the three Frenchmen, Pouget receiving a ball through his brain. Under the circumstances, one is entitled to say that Pouget was assassinated in cold blood.

This crime was not the only irregular proceeding on the part

of the Germans before a state of war existed between them and the French. For some days past, at several points on the frontier, German detachments commanded by German officers had already crossed the line, and so violated the territory of France. The French Government, however, being then desirous of avoiding anything which might lead to war, took no official notice of these unwarranted and unlawful trespasses, but, on the contrary, ordered their own troops to retire to about five or six miles inland from the frontier. The only effect upon the Germans of this cautious proceeding on the part of the French was to incite them to further violation, and so during those days preceding the 3rd they penetrated into France, often to a distance of at least five miles.

The announcement that Germany intended to take up arms against France was made at Paris by the German Ambassador, von Schoen, to Monsieur Viviani, the French Minister. Von Schoen made the following statement: "My Government have directed me to declare to the Government of the Republic that French aviators have flown across Belgium, and others have flown across Germany and dropped bombs at Nüremberg, and that my Government regard these facts as constituting an act of aggression and of violation of German territory. These acts oblige Germany to declare herself in a state of war against France." In this manner, at a quarter to six in the evening of August 3, did Germany declare war against France, basing her declaration upon grounds which had no foundation whatever in fact. At no time before the 3rd had French aviators passed over the frontiers of the country, but on the contrary, as we have already seen, the Germans themselves had been guilty, not only of the violation of French territory, but of the cold-blooded and barbarous murder of a French soldier. Under these characteristic circumstances did Germany formally declare war against France.

Notwithstanding this remarkable position the French Government, with marked courtesy, assisted the German Ambassador to reach his own country by furnishing him, free of expense, with a special train direct through France and Belgium to Germany. At Berlin, things went very differently indeed with M. Jules Cambon, the unfortunate French Ambassador there. The same night he received a telegram from France requiring him to leave Germany. He thereupon immediately interviewed the German Foreign Minister in order to obtain his passports and protested on behalf of France against the violation of Luxembourg, which Germany had occupied on the pretext that it was the intention of France to invade that country, and also protested against the

irregular proceedings of Germany before her declaration of war. The German Government thereupon let him depart, not only without any sort of courteous treatment on their part, but even as though he were personally the arch enemy of the German race. He was taken by train to the Danish frontier, treated throughout the journey as an ordinary prisoner, in the custody of armed soldiers, and required, when he reached the frontier station, to pay £180, the expenses of the train.

If one were under an obligation to state in a single word the determining cause of the war, one would be nearest the truth in simply pronouncing the words "Alsace-Lorraine." Had there been no Alsace-Lorraine question it is highly probable that there would never have been a war such as the one we are now concerned with. Ever after the Treaty of Frankfurt, when these two rich and beautiful provinces were ruthlessly wrested from France by Germany, there existed the probability of a fierce struggle between the two countries for their ultimate possession, but pride of conquest and possession strengthened Germany more and more in her determination to keep them, without regard to consequences. On the other hand a great population of Alsatians and Lorrainers, crushed beneath Teutonic suppression, had anxiously looked forward to the day when they should be delivered from their bondage and returned to their old country. France had also persisted in an enthusiastic desire to recover her lost provinces. If France could be said to have had one national ambition or impulse dominating all others, it would be that desire to recover Alsace-Lorraine.

With a country adjoining the frontier nominally an enemy country, but actually filled with a people consumed with a burning desire for the reoccupation of the French, and with the French themselves anxious, now that the opportunity had arrived, to strike a blow in harmony with this national sentiment, it was only natural that the French would at once, apart from any question of mere material strategy, risk a decided move across this border.

The following extracts from a document from the pen of M. Maurice Barres, one of the most distinguished literary men of France, subsequently published broadcast by the French Government, give a good idea, so far as a none too expert translation can, of the feeling in France in regard to Alsace and Lorraine, and make it clear why the French made the attack they did upon Germany through Lorraine at the first opportunity:

From whence comes this prodigy, this transformation of France? How is it we are all standing united, purified, and on fire? France has always been the land of reawakenings and of new beginnings. Her enemies

believed her dying. They regarded her coming end with spiteful joy; but she rose in her might and said, as she seized the sword: "Behold me! I am Youthfulness; I am Hope; I am Right invincible; I am young like Jeanne d'Arc, like the great Condé at Rocroy, like Marceau the Republican, like General Buonaparte." She breathes the clear air of the great days, sacred and national, and by an uplifting of her soul she assures Victory. It is to express this force of resurrection which there is in our race that we insist on a national fête day in honour of the Maid of Lorraine, who saved France when all appeared lost. If we do not have the fête and the commemoration of her miracles, we have better, for see that the miracle is happening again. We live to-day one of those sublime moments when in France all is saved by the outburst of our enthusiasm, by the depth of our inward fires. . . .

Ah! from what heart, from what sanctuary, has sprung that redeeming fire which has inflamed all France? What word of great poet has reanimated in our consciences the spirit of our ancestors? What act of political genius has pierced through the thicknesses of indifference, and whom must we thank and glorify for having sent throughout our nation such a current of strength and of brotherhood? *It is Alsace-Lorraine which has saved us.* It is Alsace that has performed this miracle. The secret of our strength has been reposing in the foundations of our being, unknown to ourselves. The mighty rock was pierced and the spring commenced to flow, when, some months ago, military Imperialism began to abuse, provoke, and to strike the honest traders, workmen, and peasants of Alsace because they preserved in silence a filial affection for the genius of France. The arrogant wickedness; the offences against justice; that barbarism, insulting at the same time our country and our humanity—these are what have awakened in all of us the knowledge of our moral superiority and of our mission. It is not we who have asked the question: What is the spirit that must govern the world? But since it has been asked, with one single voice France has replied: "The spirit of injustice must not prevail under Heaven," and the hearts and the armies of the entire world rush to our assistance.

Alsace-Lorraine, grief-stricken daughter, be consoled! During forty-four years, by thy fidelity, thou hast maintained in our breasts the common amity. The best of us receive from thee their virtue. Thou art our bond, our sign of communion, the hearth of our patriotism, our shining example. To-day the sacred fire has swept through all France. Thou hast saved us from ourselves. *It is for us to deliver thee.*

As we have already pointed out, the Germans, had they not preferred to break faith with Belgium and Luxembourg, could have commenced their attack on France by an invasion across the common frontier between Luxembourg and Switzerland. They moved through Belgium and Luxembourg, however, on the plea that such a movement with its incidental breaches of treaty was a "necessity." As a fact, though, it was at the best merely the

easier way by which to enter France, for the Franco-German frontier was fortified so strongly that it was highly probable that if the Germans had concentrated upon it they would have been entirely unsuccessful from the commencement, and unable to move into France at all. They therefore decided to follow the line of least resistance through a partially unprotected Belgium, and an absolutely undefended Luxembourg. This decision the Kaiser asked the world to approve, if not to applaud, as one forced upon him by "necessity." The civilised world, however, did not by any means agree with his view, for to do so would involve attaching a new meaning to a very old and well understood word. It could have been "necessary" for Germany to invade Belgium and Luxembourg only if she had first made a serious and decisively unsuccessful attempt on France through the common frontier, it also, of course, being "necessary," in fact, for her to enter France. But Germany preferred rather to quibble with a word and trifle with honour than to act as a valorous nation and meet her foe in fair fight. She preferred to break through Belgium and Luxembourg, and, murdering the Belgian nation, thus to enter France by a back and partially unprotected entrance. She preferred to do this rather than fight her way through the Verdun-Belfort line.

This decision on the part of Germany to invade Belgium and Luxembourg was not the first introduction to the world in recent years of her essentially craven character. It was apparent, on the contrary, that the Germany of the twentieth century was precisely the same Germany as of the days when Prussia, by means in each case of a cowardly treachery alone, dismembered a feeble and defenceless Denmark, later disposed of a deluded and unequal Austria, and, yet later still, in 1870, ravaged and tore to pieces an unprepared and relatively weak France. Never in modern history had Germany fought a foe who was in any way her match. Her methods in this war, as in the past, were those of a cunning coward. To fight, she must either be immensely stronger than her opponent, or have the assistance of some knavish and mean act, such as the breach of a treaty or the forgery of a diplomatic telegram, or be able to take her foe entirely by surprise and so stab him in the back. Under no other circumstances had the coward German nation ever in modern times engaged in armed struggle.

It will now, perhaps, be convenient to summarise as briefly as possible the first operations on the Franco-German frontier. Moving forward from the barrier fortifications Verdun-Belfort, the task of the French army would be to enter the wooded country

to the north and east of Verdun, and to cross the Vosges mountains, which ran southward, a great natural barrier, from the east of Nancy to the Swiss frontier, by, in the north, the region in the neighbourhood of Nancy, in the centre, the region of the Hill du Bonhomme, and, in the south, the region of the Summit of Alsace. At least two million men, one million on each side, were to be engaged from the commencement in the titanic struggle which was now to take place.

The first incident of importance took place, like others to which we have already alluded, on August 3 before war had been declared by Germany against France. The German army which had advanced through Luxembourg arrived on that day at Longwy, a French town immediately on the frontier. This town possessed a very ancient out-of-date fortress—at one time, though, a masterpiece of Vauban—and, relying upon the security supposed to result from the neutralisation of Belgium and Luxembourg, was held, without any modern fortification, by a garrison of ridiculously little strength, not exceeding a battalion at the most. A small town with a decrepit fortress and an inadequate garrison—not even dreaming of an attack at this moment of formal peace—was naturally a particularly likeable objective for the treacherous German horde, and so, without waiting for the declaration of war, a delay which could not have postponed operations more than a few hours, the Germans commenced to bombard the defenceless town. But, to the surprise of the enemy, for twenty-four days did gallant little Longwy resist the attack, and it was not until August 27, when more than a half of the heroic handful of garrison had been killed or wounded, that the place capitulated. Colonel Darche, the Governor, was immediately afterwards created an officer of the Legion d'Honneur for his heroic conduct. This remarkable resistance by so feeble a stronghold had a most important effect, not only on the part of the German invasion concentrated in that neighbourhood, but also throughout the whole enemy line. It meant that the German army in that quarter was unable to advance southwards towards Paris in equal step with the rest of their right wing, and thus gave the French army an opportunity to complete its mobilisation and concentrate sufficient forces upon and to the north of Verdun.

On August 4 the German army was almost entirely engaged on the eastern frontier in a gradual endeavour throughout the whole length of the line to penetrate into French territory. The result of their day's operations was that by many cavalry reconnaisances and infantry patrols, a number of small villages and positions were occupied by the enemy; both sides, French and

German, suffering considerable loss in killed and wounded and prisoners. The operations of the 5th were of a similar character.

On August 6 the French army was occupied mainly in recovering the zone of about four or five miles which before the war they had allowed to remain unoccupied by their troops, with a view to avoiding premature conflict with the German army, and which, of course, the latter had already greedily seized in many parts. Here and there, however, the French were able that day to cross the frontier, some squadrons of cavalry penetrating into Lorraine and occupying Vic and Moyen-Vic.

The 7th saw the actual commencement of the French offensive. Devoting their attention particularly to the southern end of the frontier, they made a determined advance into Alsace, and so successful were they that they succeeded in occupying the town of Altkirch. This, without doubt, was a notable achievement. The town had been fortified by the Germans with carefully prepared, well designed, and, as they believed, almost impregnable field works, and was occupied by a brigade. On a neighbouring hill which commanded the French advance on to the town they had established themselves in perfect entrenchment, supported by six great guns and a very large number of machine guns. To gain the town, the French had accordingly to deal particularly and decisively with this opposition; so, bringing up some formidable batteries of artillery, a vigorous bombardment at once took place. Notwithstanding the very advantageous position of the Germans, and their great strength in artillery, the French eventually reduced all their batteries to silence. Then followed the work of the infantry. A violent assault was made upon the German entrenchments, and this proved so successful that the enemy, unable to withstand the bayonets of the French, was absolutely routed and the position was thus definitely gained by the French. This meant that the enemy was forced to evacuate the town, and he did so in the greatest disorder, being pursued towards Mulhouse by the French Dragoons.

By this time night had fallen. A French advance guard advanced to the town, and then, without any loss of time or opportunity, the French entered Altkirch and took up the pursuit of the flying enemy, whose movements a black night now aided. The old Alsatian town gave the "invaders" a most enthusiastic reception. All the windows were opened, and old men who had taken part in the war of 1870 rushed out of the houses to embrace the victors. A great cry of joy went up throughout the town. It was an hour of indescribable emotion. The objective of the French army now was Mulhouse, some miles farther in the interior of Alsace than

Altkirch, and by 5 o'clock in the morning the French pursuit of the retreating enemy was so successful that their columns found themselves in front of Mulhouse, entirely abandoned by the enemy, who, before leaving the town, had with his usual barbarity set fire to a great part of it, and particularly to those places from which the French might have obtained provisions. The French, however, did not stop for anything in the way of reprovisionment; they were too anxious to penetrate into the heart of Alsace and to follow up the victory they had already gained over the Germans; so their cavalry passed through the town at a gallop, hugging closely the heels of the German rearguard as far as Neu Breisach, some miles to the north-east of Mulhouse, and there they established themselves with a large body of other troops, which subsequently arrived, just outside the town. And here too, as at Altkirch, the French had a warm reception. The people of the town formed themselves into a procession, and, with the French tricolour at their head, moved through the streets acclaiming the hurrying troops and encouraging them in their pursuit.

In this manner, within four days after the commencement of the war, had the French penetrated into Alsace, to Altkirch, on to Mulhouse, and thence to Neu Breisach.

It is impossible to conceive a greater difference than that between the German invasion of Belgium and France and the French invasion of Alsace and Lorraine. Into Belgium and France poured the Germans as a devastating horde, spreading destruction and death throughout the whole of the territory through which they passed. Into Alsace and Lorraine the French army passed, greeted, as we have seen, as saviours of their country by a people who now saw the arrival of the day for which they had so long and ardently hoped—when their hated German masters should be driven out, and they once more should become a part of the France they had always remembered and loved so well.

The three days October 8, 9, and 10 were days of violent fighting in the Vosges mountains. On the 8th, notwithstanding a most powerful and obstinate resistance on the part of the enemy, the French by the evening had the satisfaction of occupying the highly important Hills of Bonhomme and St. Marie, an occupation which they made secure on the following morning after many and serious losses. Farther north, in the region of Longuyon-Spincourt, a great force of German cavalry supported by infantry had forced a battalion of foot chasseurs to yield a little ground; but nevertheless, however hard they tried, the Germans were unable to invade the territory from Spincourt to the north-east of Verdun.

There was yet hope that the French army in that region might reach and succour gallant Longwy.

The French occupation of Mulhouse, however, was not destined to have, for the present, any permanency. A day had scarcely passed with the French in occupation of the town before the enemy, having obtained very considerable reinforcements, gathered himself together for a great effort to reoccupy the town. So, on Sunday August 9, the town became the subject of a furious bombardment, followed up by an attack by the Germans in immense force. This attack, or rather counter-attack, was so overwhelming that notwithstanding the gallant resistance, the French were forced to evacuate the town, but the fighting by no means ceased with this evacuation. During the whole of the following day the entire country surrounding Mulhouse was the scene of a great number of desperate engagements between the opposing forces, the French being fortunate enough in the end to retain their occupation of the enemy's country right up almost to the walls of the town.

Fighting was now proceeding, and was destined to proceed for very many months more, throughout the whole extent of the country lying on and about the eastern frontier from the north of Verdun, right down to Belfort near the confines of Switzerland. The fighting was so complicated, and the positions were so many and changed so frequently, that it would be impossible to describe each engagement with any degree of accuracy, or even at all. It was sometimes a town, or a village, or a well-known mountain or hill, plateau or valley, or a wood or a field, or some other area of distinct character that would be the scene of combat, and so may have been referred to precisely in some report. But as often as not an engagement would take place in the neighbourhood of some unknown or unnamed hamlet or farm, field, hill, or other area. Everywhere throughout the whole country, generally severely mountainous, the struggle thus proceeded, on lines which really constituted one great battle, over an area of over 100 miles in length and perhaps in some places thirty to forty miles in breadth. All the roads were being traversed by troops, and because of the evenness, and consequent convenience of roads in operations, actual fighting would generally be taking place in their near neighbourhood. So one could pass along a road and by merely diverging across a field or two, or along some path, discover fields ploughed up with shells, great and long heaps and lines of clods of earth thrown up on the green grass, and with gaping holes, almost pits, formed by shells ; trees, single, and even in rows and clumps, either cut down by shells or felled purposely in order to

open up a line of firing; broken telegraph poles, with their wires hanging down or strewn along the ground; shattered and scorched hop gardens, and fields with blackened, rotting crops of corn, and ploughs and farm implements and carts smashed out of all recognition; farm houses and cottages burned out entirely, or standing, crumbling masses, the result of shell fire; and dead animals, horses, and cattle lying about everywhere, putrid and ghastly. Such was the field of this great battle, cut up by miles and miles of trenches, evacuated for the time being by their late occupiers, half full of water and debris. The observer could only see such sights as these, but he might hear the thunder of the artillery in the distance. As for seeing the fight, as history itself had described one, that was an impossibility. A soldier himself who had taken part in some engagement could know only what he and his own particular force had been doing for the moment, and would generally be unable to state the precise general results of any operation. A superior officer, even, could know nothing more than the results for which he was himself responsible. Only at Headquarters, in a room far removed perhaps from anything in the shape of actual conflict, could the threads of incident be gathered together.

One can therefore appreciate the fact that a result attained in any particular district cannot indicate, unless in an exceptional instance, anything in the nature of a decisive general result. But to return to the narrative.

On the 11th the position of affairs to the north and north-east of Verdun and Nancy, and in the Vosges and around Mulhouse, had resulted in little change to the fortunes of either side. Only in two places, Mangiennes and Pillon, had any fighting of exceptional interest taken place. At Mangiennes quite a bitter and strenuous struggle occurred. The precise and well-directed firing of the French absolutely demoralised the enemy. His 5th Chasseurs gave way to a true panic, though these were supported by the 7th, 8th, and 21st Dragoons and an immense force of artillery with six companies of machine guns. Notwithstanding the overwhelming character of this force, the success of the French here was absolutely complete, three cannons and three machine guns with their ammunition being taken after a fight which had lasted not only through the day, but also the preceding night.

On the following day, the 12th, the advantage the French had obtained at Mangiennes was followed up so successfully that the enemy was again utterly routed, nine German officers and 1,000 German soldiers being taken prisoners—captured for the most

CAPTURED GERMAN TRENCHES AT LES EPARGES.

By a system of saps the German trenches were frequently mined, the craters formed by the upheaval being occupied and put into a state of defence and habitation. The next duty of the occupants was to bury the dead, who are seen piled along the bottom of the trench.

part in a number of villages in the neighbourhood of the River Othain.

This day had also its importance in being that on which Austria officially became the enemy of the Allies. Notwithstanding the fact that war had actually broken out, and had been for some time in existence between Germany and the Allies, yet curiously, as a matter of form, no state of war had yet existed between Britain and France, on the one hand, and Austria on the other. Consequently the Ambassadors of Austria in London and at Paris had continued peacefully to remain at their posts. During the first week or so of the war the Allies had no knowledge of any act of war or other hostile act by Austria against them, although, as a fact, it was well understood that Austria was not only the Ally of Germany, but had for some time been fighting against Serbia, and was even the initiator, in actual fact, of the great war. The French Government, having discovered, however, that a body of Austrian troops had been dispatched towards the French frontier, had called upon the Austrian Ambassador at Paris to explain in definite terms, by August 8, the intentions of his Government. The 8th arrived and passed, but the Austrian Government had not instructed its Ambassador at Paris as to the reply he should give to France.

The Government of the French Republic accordingly addressed the following declaration to the Government of Austria-Hungary:

> Having declared war on Serbia, thereby taking the lead in European hostilities, the Austro-Hungarian Government placed itself, without any provocation from the Government of the French Republic, in a state of war with France: (1) After Germany had successively declared war on Russia and on France, Austria-Hungary intervened in the conflict by declaring war on Russia, who was already fighting on the side of France; (2) According to many trustworthy sources of information Austria-Hungary dispatched troops to the German frontier under circumstances which constituted a direct menace to France. In view of these facts the French Government feels itself compelled to announce to the Austro-Hungarian Government that it will take all available measures to reply to its acts and threats.

The French Ambassador being no longer at Vienna and the Austrian Ambassador having just left Paris, this declaration was handed by Sir Edward Grey on August 12 to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in London. In handing it to him, Sir Edward Grey informed him that Great Britain associated herself entirely with its contents and that consequently a state of war would exist between England and Austria-Hungary from midnight. All these measures had been taken by England and France in perfect agreement one with another.

On the 15th, Austria having thus been diplomatically disposed of, the struggle on the Vosges was renewed with a desperate intensity. The Hills of Bonhomme, St. Marie, and Saales—positions of the greatest strategic importance—became the centres of the fierce fight which now took place. The enemy, already firmly established there with men and guns, was straining every effort to maintain his advantage, throw back the French onslaught, and force his way into France. The French, thanks to their superiority in artillery, were able to repulse all these endeavours, notwithstanding the great numerical superiority of the enemy's troops. At Saales the fighting was particularly intense. With great skill the French artillery seized from the rear the German positions; its fire greatly assisted the task of the infantry, who consequently suffered only insignificant losses without even having any dead to deplore. So impetuous was the French attack that it threw the Germans into the greatest disorder and forced them ultimately to abandon Saales with remarkable precipitancy, leaving behind them many guns and much equipment. Having taken more than 800 of the enemy prisoners, the French were able at length to occupy the town itself of Saales.

These operations in the Vosges mountains were of the utmost importance to the French plans. It was absolutely necessary that the French troops should become masters of the mountain ridges in order effectively to debouch into Alsace. From the moment of their mobilisation it had been the objective of the troops in this region to throw themselves into Alsace. The Germans, however, had a great advantage here. Before the commencement of the war, it will be remembered, right up to the declaration of war, the French army had remained at a distance of some miles from the frontier, whilst the Germans had not only maintained a position close on to the frontier, but had even crossed it. This meant that the enemy had been in a position to attain the crests of the Vosges and to occupy them in great strength before the French army had any opportunity to prevent them. The French, therefore, in endeavouring to cross the Vosges had to meet an enemy who had already well established himself on the mountains. The initial success of the French on the Vosges was accordingly a remarkable exhibition of gallantry, determination, and military skill.

The French commenced their operations against the Vosges by the south. In this neighbourhood, though the mountains there attained the greatest height, yet they were more accessible to the French by reason not only of the formation of the ground, but also because of the proximity of the French forts. The Sum-

mit of Alsace, a point of infinite importance to them, was the first mountain position occupied by the French, who subjected it to the fire of the guns of the fort of Servance. The slopes of the Vosges in this region on the French side were gentle, but on the Alsatian side were so rugged, steep, and peaked as to make it a very difficult task for the enemy to establish and maintain himself on the mountains. So the French were soon able, without—relatively speaking—very great difficulty, to become masters of the Hill of Bussang, almost at the same time directing their efforts upon the Hohneck and the Schlucht, where the conditions were very similar, the result being identical.

Farther north, in the centre sector of the Vosges, nature was no longer at work on the side of the French. Here were the Hills of Bonhomme and St. Marie, which the French had taken, as already described, at immense cost, in order to assure the cover on their right which was necessary in order that they might progress in the direction of the opening of Saales and thence to Strasburg. The importance of the operations of the Hills of Bonhomme and St. Marie and of the neighbourhood of Saales is thus apparent. Their success was necessary if Strasburg was to be attained.

One can accordingly imagine without any difficulty how great was the resistance of the enemy to the advance of the French in this region. Here, as already noted, Nature was on the side of the enemy and against the French. Our ally had here to negotiate mountain ranges on a side always more or less perpendicular, studded with peaks, and where the terraces and crests themselves, once attained, were narrow and thickly wooded. Under such circumstances it was difficult to assure the infantry the support of the artillery. Moreover, the attempt to cross the mountains had to be made very circuitously, for the Germans were strongly entrenched on the narrow crests, protected by the trees and woods, and well guarded against surprise and attack by wire entanglements, and down their own, the Alsatian slopes, they had established extensive field fortifications with heavy artillery. However, notwithstanding all these formidable difficulties, the French did gradually attain the heights, and by bringing round their artillery by way of the lowest ranges of the mountains upon the flanks of the enemy, occupied ultimately the Hills of Bonhomme, St. Marie, and Saales. At the same time the French occupied the Col d'Arbeis, which was comparatively open and was accordingly effected without much difficulty. The advantage of this operation was that a much-needed passage was found for the transit of their artillery. Having occupied Saales the French attained the

position of Mont Donon, which permitted them to expand in all directions the field of their action.

By this time Pont-à-Mousson had become the subject of a fierce bombardment by the enemy. A great number of heavy guns had been brought up before the town, more than a hundred projectiles of great calibre, each weighing 100 kilos and containing an enormous charge of picrite, being thrown upon and into the gallant town. Fortunately, however, these great guns produced little actual effect, and did nothing at all to diminish the courage of the people of the town.

Now, until the 22nd, the fight continued all over the eastern front. A great battle took place at Blamont; Thann was retaken; the march into Alsace was brilliantly pursued; Lorquin, 10 kilometres distant from Saarebourg, was occupied; Schirmeck, too, 12 kilometres from Saales, was occupied; great forces of the enemy, especially troops drawn from the garrison of Strasburg, were almost annihilated; the French cavalry had reached Muhlbach; Villé, on the road to Schlestadt, was occupied; and everywhere in Alsace and Lorraine the Germans, in the course of innumerable local actions, suffered immense losses.

Mulhouse was reoccupied on the 19th. By a bold movement General Pau, once master of Thann and Dannemarie, brought up his troops to the west of Mulhouse, thus affording the enemy an opportunity to fight between the French lines and the Swiss frontier. The opportunity was seized, a bitter struggle took place, and the Germans were thrown back upon Mulhouse. Then the French right concentrated upon Altkirch, and the left advanced in the direction of Colmar and Neu Breisach, threatening the enemy's line of retreat. The Germans were forced to fight once more, and after a bitter struggle were again forced back in yet greater disorder than before. Mulhouse itself at length was reached, and in one of its suburbs the French came again into contact with the enemy. Now they attacked with desperate energy with the bayonet, put the enemy to flight, seized his cannon, and made an enormous capture of prisoners. Forced back and back, the enemy found himself at length in the streets of the town, pressed as hard as ever by the French, and ultimately even into the houses, where the French followed and completed their work. The enemy losses were enormous. But Mulhouse was now in the hands of the French. Fighting, however, had not entirely ceased, for our ally, determined to follow up her success, pursued the retreating remnant of the enemy troops, and forced them to fall back towards the Rhine, and ultimately to cross it in the greatest disorder.

On this day the French engaged in Upper Alsace attained the object for which they had originally set out—the repulsion of the German forces to the right bank of the Rhine.

In Lorraine the front of our ally extended as far as the north of Sarrebourg, passing by Dieuze-Morhange as far as Delmé and Château-Salins. On August 22, after a fierce battle on the 21st at Hunningue near the Swiss frontier, it was possible to sum up the general situation, and this was done in an official French bulletin of that date as follows:

Our troops from Northern Alsace having assured the *débouché* upon Colmar, it is superfluous to insist upon the importance of the series of operations which established us so firmly on the Vosges and the Summit of Alsace, and at Donon, and then enabled us to descend through the valleys to the plain. The two efforts were solid, and it was their close concert which assured them their success. One may here note that the conquest of the Vosges mountains was achieved with very limited resources at the commencement, and these were augmented only little by little.

On the Summit of Alsace and at Honeck, for instance, our forces were composed of from a battalion of chasseurs to a regiment of infantry. The losses were equally slight; twenty men on our side and a hundred on the German side. For the central sector, the results were higher, varying from a regiment to a brigade. Our losses at the Col du Bonhomme and at the Col de St. Marie attained the figure of 600 dead or wounded. In retaliation our flank movement and the cannonade of our artillery upon the German positions inflicted losses on the enemy six times higher than ours.

In the course of these completely victorious operations, our troops, stimulated by their Alpine colleagues, showed without exception the ardour and agility necessitated in mountain warfare. In different engagements they took from the enemy several field guns and heavy pieces of artillery. It must not be forgotten that they also captured an enemy flag. Throughout the whole front along the Vosges, as in that of Northern Alsace, the objective we had in view was fully attained.

For the rest of the month of August the fighting continued in the Vosges and Lorraine without, however, any substantial change in the relative positions of the opposing armies except that eventually the French received some serious checks before Sarrebourg and in the region of Morhange, where, however, they were able eventually to establish themselves in strong defensive positions. In this way and for these reasons our ally had to fall back in order to reorganise his forces; some parts of his army establishing itself upon the Grand Couronné of Nancy, the others in the French Vosges.

Now the Germans took up the offensive. In two days, however, the French were so successful, after continuous fighting, as themselves to pass from the defensive and to be in a position once

more to attack the enemy. Until the end of the month this attack continued vigorously but slowly. The operations were in fact nothing but siege warfare, every position when occupied being immediately fortified and made the base for reorganisation and farther advance. One can accordingly understand how, notwithstanding perpetual fighting, progress on one side or the other was so slow in this region. Nevertheless, each day saw some local success gained by one side or the other, in general fortune favouring the French.

It should be noted that from the commencement of the campaign the region of Nancy and Woëvre, comprising the district between Metz, on the German side, and Toul and Verdun, on the French side, was not for some time the theatre of any important operations.

Now, however, events were happening. We must accordingly give some attention to Nancy and the fighting in that neighbourhood.

The fight at and around Nancy was of infinite importance in the progress of the war. The issue was supremely critical. The ultimate victory of the French there was both the prelude and the crown of the Battles of the Ourcq and the Marne. While the Allies were driving back the Germans from Paris, during the first fortnight of September, the French in the neighbourhood of Nancy were checking the enemy's progress, and particularly the army of the German Crown Prince.

Nancy was a town which at the commencement of the war had a population of about 120,000 inhabitants, devoted almost entirely to manufactures, and was immensely wealthy and prosperous. It was of all other towns in the north of France the one which the enemy would have liked to occupy, to hold, to ransom, and to sack. But apart from these considerations it had a supreme military value to whichever side should occupy it. The centre of a network of roads leading to and through the heart of France, it was also the junction of a widely spreading railway system of the highest strategical importance. Occupied by the Germans, they would be in possession of a centre directly in touch with Strasburg and all the military railroads of Germany on the other side of the Rhine, and also of a focus of lines running in all directions through the whole length and breadth of France.

Reference has already been made to the Grand Couronné of Nancy. This was the name given to the great and beautiful heights which surrounded the town and gave it so picturesque and attractive a setting. The hills, rising to a very considerable altitude, were almost entirely covered with woods and abruptly

broken off by steps and terraces, one of which, known as the Plateau of Amance, was destined to be the scene of the most important incidents in the whole of the struggle around Nancy. The town itself was occupied by a formidable garrison, reinforced very strongly from Toul, and also by troops which in the course of the operations that had already taken place had been forced to retreat. The French were in possession of abundant artillery, and had moreover the advantage of being established in some of the best positions, including the Plateau of Amance. Although the enemy was, as usual, well supplied with artillery, yet on this occasion he was undoubtedly outclassed; but in the matter of men, Germany had a great numerical advantage. The French guns were placed most advantageously on all the heights of the Grand Couronné, the Plateau of Amance being particularly well supplied in this respect.

On September 3 the Germans sweeping down from the east had occupied after a ruthless bombardment, already described, the town and forts of Pont-à-Mousson. On the 4th the Germans had also arrived from the north and settled down, too, in the forts at Mousson. To the south the Germans were in possession, after a bitter struggle, of Lunéville and the region to the east, where they also occupied the district running north of Sarrebourg and Dieuze. So from all these directions the enemy pressed forward towards Nancy in the centre. Three days of desperate fighting took place, resulting in the abandonment by the French of Loisy and St. Genevieve d'Amance.

The forts of Nancy had become the objective of a titanic effort on the part of the enemy. Now or never were the Germans to attain their immediate aim and reduce and occupy the town. The Kaiser, leaving the operations of his right wing, now at the critical stage of its advance on Paris, in the hands of Von Kluck and his other generals, was concentrating his attention upon Nancy, even personally directing the attacks of the Germans. Having obtained the success he had in this neighbourhood, he had persuaded himself that victory here was certain. At Epply, on September 7, he had settled down with his staff, and was actually awaiting, he and his staff arrayed in their most brilliant uniforms and on their noblest chargers, attended by 4,000 of his picked cavalry, for the moment when he should make his triumphant entry into the capital of French Lorraine. In the early morning, thus expectant, he ordered his troops to make a decisive attempt. They advanced on to Nancy in their foolish Teutonic pride and optimism, with bands playing and the infantry even in the far-famed and ridiculous "goose-step" of the parade. But alas

for the hopes of the Kaiser and of his army, which, under the immediate command of his son, the Crown Prince, was intended to effect such great things: the French, at midday, were suddenly to rouse themselves on the Plateau of Amance. As the Kaiser's hordes thus advanced with their music and at their absurd step and pace, the day, which at its commencement was darkened with mist, suddenly cleared and gave way to a brilliant sunlight. So in the sight of the French army the doomed Teutons thus advanced, charging—the cavalry even—the hill of Amance. The French made no move whatever; they allowed them to advance and yet advance, and the cavalry to charge, and not until the Germans were within three hundred yards of the slopes of the hill did the French take up the offensive, or even the defensive. Then, without warning, as though it were a sudden thunderstorm of unparalleled tropical violence, the artillery of our ally on the plateaux and on the crests of the hills belched forth its fire and shell. There was at once an end to the music and to the "goose-step." Confusion now reigned where but a few moments before the enemy soldiery had been advancing, and his cavalry charging as though on parade or at manœuvres. But the confusion was destined to turn into something worse—to death for all those who had escaped the deadly hail of shell. The French infantry swarmed out, bayonetting them unmercifully. Having thus done their work, and incidentally proved the futility of a cavalry charge against an entrenched infantry, the French retired. The slopes of the hills were covered with heaps of dead Germans and rushing remnants of them in all directions—some tearing down the hills, some running along the sides, some breathlessly swarming up, some disappearing into the woods and some blindly rushing out. Once more the French artillery began to play; now annihilation was the only word to describe what happened. And thus, on this memorable afternoon, in the course of a merciless struggle, did the French soldiery in a supremely heroic and skilful move put a Teuton army to rout, and in the evening the gallant French, by a furious offensive, were able to reoccupy the villages of St. Genevieve and Loisy.

The offensive having now passed to the French, for three days did they follow it up with furious and deadly intensity. At length, on the 11th, they made a general attack on the enemy at Amance, Champelour, Villaine, and Neuvlotte. The dead were strewn everywhere, and often in great heaps; houses and villages were desolated and destroyed, and the woods and forests were blazing fiercely, in great numbers of places, lighting up the field of battle, especially during the nights, with weird and fearsome glare. Right through the night of the 11th did this great and extensive struggle

persist, closing on the following day in the decisive rout of the enemy. Meanwhile, the Kaiser, his foolish optimism and his theatrical intentions crushed and frustrated, had changed into a less glorious uniform and retired to Jellaucourt, where, with his staff also more soberly arrayed, he awaited the issue of the battle. And here, as at Epply, he was forced to retire, mad with anger, disappointment, and humiliation.

As we have already said, these events at Nancy were the prelude and crown of the great victories of the Ourcq and the Marne. By this time, as a result of a remarkable co-ordination of operations of the French Generalissimo, Joffre, the advance of the German army into France and on to Paris had been once for all checked.

After this, for a long period, little was done in this region on either side, beyond for a week or so a slow but steady pressure by the French on the enemy forces which necessitated the constant retreat of the latter. By the 14th the enemy was in full retreat from Nancy. By the 19th the Crown Prince was continuing to fall back, the French, advancing steadily into Lorraine, occupying Raon l'Etape. On the 21st the enemy began to fortify himself at Daon, to the south of Château-Salins. By the end of September the Germans had been able to do no more, in face of the persistent pressure of the French, than to continue wherever possible to dig themselves into the earth as near as they dared to the French frontier, their only success having been the reoccupation of a village to the south of Blamont, at the end, however, being forced to evacuate Nomeny and Arracourt.

CHAPTER XIX

ENTRENCHED FOR THE WINTER

The position of the two lines after the Battle of Ypres—A state of siege is initiated—Trenches take the place of fortresses—A siege or battle no longer within the frame of any one picture—The troops are all underground—A modern battlefield—From the sea to the Vosges there was one vast entrenched camp—Trench warfare in the Russo-Turkish and the Russo-Japanese wars—German preparations for trench warfare—French trenches—The German—The Allies learn something about trenches from the Germans—The equipment of the French army for trench construction—How work in the trenches was regulated—The British trenches—Where the artillery was placed—The entanglements—Digging trenches on the field of battle—Relieving a trench at night-time—Trench life during the daytime—The discomforts of trench life—The armies use hand grenades, mortars, and other weapons of bygone days—The struggle for Priest's Wood—Sapping—Overground attacks—Drain-pipes used as bomb-throwers—The periscope—Making the best of the dug-outs.

AFTER the Battle of the Marne the German line, as we have seen, was pushed back northward to the other side of the River Aisne, so far as Neufchâtel on the east, thence southward on the hither side of the river, and across it through the Argonne woods and hills to Verdun and thence across the Meuse southward to St. Mihiel, where it turned eastward again to Pont-à-Mousson across the Moselle. This line, after the Battle of Ypres, was extended, on the west, northward from Troyon across the Ourcq up through Arras, Armentières, Ypres, and Dixmude to Nieuport on the coast, the British, with the Belgians and the French, occupying an extent of about 70 miles from Arras to the sea, the remainder of the line, extending for about 250 miles, being held by the French. At the extreme east, at Pont-à-Mousson, the line went southward to the Franco-Swiss frontier for another 180 miles, so constituting an entire front of 500 miles.

For the present we are concerned only with the 320 miles to the north which were held by the Belgians, the British, and the French. Here the Allies found themselves by the end of November facing a strongly entrenched enemy, and at the commencement of what was to prove a persistent and almost monotonous struggle between the opposing trenches, destined to continue during the whole of the winter.

The Germans had occupied positions and given them a character which was to give to the struggle, during these many bitter

months, the character of siege operations. The task before the Allies was theoretically to conquer these enemy trenches, which were occupied almost continuously along a line of 320 miles, strengthened by the Germans, as they were, by every variety of obstacle and field fortification, and covered by a concentrated fire of their artillery and machine guns. The enemy was no longer, for the time being, carrying on a determined offensive. On the other hand the Allies were not yet actually in a position, having regard to their resources, to take up the offensive. To a certain extent there was now a deadlock, each side being content for a while merely to hold its own. But for 60 miles of the line the enemy was fortunate in occupying a region which naturally lent itself to defensive operations. They had established their positions upon the hills commanding the River Aisne, the plateau of Craonne, the heights to the north of Reims, and from this latter city across the Champagne and the Argonne. Farther west a giant trench had already been unconsciously prepared for their use in the great Northern Canal which was in course of construction from Peronne to Arleux. It is not difficult to understand how easily this canal could be made available for the purposes of the enemy and how readily he would seize upon it.

The Germans having thus settled down upon this enormously extended line, they proceeded to make of it a fortification which should at least prevent the Allies turning them out of the French and Belgian territory which they had just occupied. The task before the Allies was accordingly to break through these fortifications, or maintain their own front against them until, in the spring, their reinforcements, particularly from England, should be at hand.

In older days a fortress was an imposing construction, rising high above the ground, dominating the neighbourhood and boldly inviting attack. As, however, the science of fortification and of artillery and warfare generally progressed, the principles of the construction of fortresses changed very greatly. As artillery improved, so fortresses found greater safety in diminished height above the ground, until, with the supreme achievements of the modern artillerist, fortresses disappeared entirely beneath the earth. And so we find that the German troops fortified themselves and the territory they had occupied on and behind the River Aisne, and northward by Lille to Nieuport, with a system of underground fortresses or trenches. The aspect of the field of battle and of battle itself had changed in like manner. In past days a siege was a busy, thrilling scene of masses of men attacking a fortress with cannon, scaling ladders, and other means, all men and material within the frame of the picture. Not only

could the attacking forces be seen and depicted, but also the defenders, either in person on the parapets, or by their weapons through and over the walls. A battle too in an open region of country, such as that existing, for instance, at any spot between Dixmude and Pont-à-Mousson, would be a scene in a restricted area of massed struggling men, horses, and artillery in all the confusion of close personal conflict. Now, however, this condition of things no longer obtained. No frame could be made so great as to contain a canvas sufficiently extensive for a picture of a scene enacted over a length of 320 miles, nor, moreover, could any painter, however gifted, imagine such a scene. Still less could it be described in writing.

In this war the fortifications or trenches were constructed entirely with a view to their concealment from the vision of the enemy. The troops engaged, too, were all underground or in some distant billet in reserve far away from the scene, and the artillery, with its great range, was not only miles away from its objective, but also concealed by natural objects such as trees, even though it might be necessary to plant a tree or clump of trees for the particular purpose before and around the guns. An uninstructed spectator on such a field of battle as this would see nothing but the rolling plains, the hedge-girt fields, the winding river, and the tree-topped hills on the horizon. He might hear the thunder of the artillery and the whip-like snap of the rifles, and perhaps see shells hurtling through the air. At the same time it would yet be possible to see a ploughman pursuing his peaceful occupation quite regardless, and perhaps unconscious, of the fact that his field was the centre of a battle. If, however, he looked and inquired closer, he might discover that the farmhouses, cottages, and villages were all practically in the sole possession of soldiery, and the fields and crops trampled down and churned into mud by reason of much movement at some time or other of many men.

As conditions of warfare had thus changed, so was the modern soldier a very different man to his predecessor. In the great battles on the Marne, the Aisne, and at Ypres there was no room in the army of either belligerent for the men of one idea and one function. The foot soldier was no longer an expert because of his facility with the rifle; he must carry and be able to use as well the pickaxe and the spade. If need be, and such need did at least once occur in South Africa and was effectively supplied, his officer must have sufficient initiative, knowledge, and versatility to command a battery of artillery. The gunner, too, must be prepared to fight as an infantryman; and the cavalryman, much of his special functions being now assumed by the aviator, must

be ready and willing to descend from and leave his horse and enter the fray with and as a foot soldier in the trenches or in the struggle with the bayonet. There no longer existed the hitherto impassable line of division between the three arms of the service, and the engineer, though not even yet officially regarded as an arm, had at length come into his own. Of all classes of soldiers he was the one who now directed and carried out essential operations, and in some measure or other all the other arms at some time or other were engineers themselves.

The River Aisne and the line from the sea to the Vosges had thus become one vast entrenched camp, each side settling down in the earth opposite the other at distances sometimes of only a few yards and generally, at the most, not more than half a mile, the result being that the war in this part of its operations for many dreary months during the ensuing winter was to be nothing but one long series of duels between well-masked batteries, yielding nothing in the way of decisive results.

This method of trench warfare was almost as ancient as warfare itself, so far as it meant only arrangements by which belligerents might obtain cover, but in its modern application and in battles in which modern artillery and rifles were used, it had its origin in the operations of the Turks in the Russo-Turkish war of 1878. Then, with disastrous results to the Russians, the Turks went into battle not only with rifles, but with entrenching tools, and so covered themselves that the fire of the Russians was of little or no substantial effect. The Russians, taken entirely by surprise by this method, were unprovided with the necessary tools, and had to submit to disaster after disaster, until they managed gradually to acquire some of the enemy's tools and learn from him something of his methods. In the Russo-Japanese war in Manchuria, and particularly at the Battle of Sha-Ho, entrenchment was carried to a fine art by both belligerents, batteries pounding away all day without inflicting any injury whatever upon one another, the inefficacy of the operations being only discovered a considerable time afterwards. Here on the Aisne and the line through the north of France the Germans and the Allies were commencing a similar battle, but with vastly superior guns to those used in the Russo-Japanese war, destined to last for a very long period, during which neither party would be able to do the other much harm.

The Germans seemed to have learned and applied the lessons of Manchuria with remarkable avidity. Remarking that the same methods had been used in the Balkan wars, they were determined to take the initiative and introduce them into the great European war. Undoubtedly, long before the war had

commenced, the German army had made most effective preparations for the adoption in practice of this method. The men were trained to a pitch of almost absolute perfection in the art of making and availing themselves of trenches. Their equipment, too, incidental to a trench warfare, was equally perfect. Not only had the army all the necessary tools, but it also carried with it much useful material for finishing off the construction of the trenches, and appropriate weapons, in the shape of hand grenades and mortars, adapted for the purpose from patterns of an almost long-departed method of warfare.

Generally speaking, the French army had a knowledge of the construction and use of only three types of trench, not one of which was comparable to the trench dug by the German. The French trench was little more than a primitive excavation suited either for a seated rifleman, or for one shooting on his knees, or for a rifleman lying down on the ground. The favourite method of the latter type of entrenchment was nothing more than the heaping of a mound of soil to the height of about a foot in front of each marksman, who, lying prone, was thus concealed from the enemy. However perfect this very remarkable method may have been under other conditions, it was found to have little value, if any at all, in the fighting that took place in the north of France.

The Germans in their characteristic and thorough fashion used trenches of an almost complicated design, destined sometimes only for defence, at other times only for the offensive. Imagine a long ditch 3 ft. to 4½ ft. in depth and about 2 ft. wide; at the top of the front side was formed a rest for the arms of the rifleman; at the bottom of the ditch against the front side ran a raised terrace, called a banquette, on which the soldiers stood, the lower part of the front being excavated so that a considerable cavity was formed having its floor level with the banquette, which was used for the storage of ammunition, equipment, and food. Above this ditch, resting on the back side, which was made slightly higher than the front, was a roof formed of telegraph or similar poles, right across the trench to some distance in front of the position of the rifleman. This roof was covered with earth, straw, and grass, or other material which was the same in appearance as the ground of the country in which the trench was constructed, so that the trench itself and any sign of it was concealed from those who might be looking for it.

So one can now imagine the trench in working order. The men stationed at distances of about 3 ft. from one another, against the front wall, standing on the banquette prepared or ready to fire. In front of each man, opposite his legs beneath the front,

was the cavity full of stores. Behind him, between the banquette and the back wall, was the floor of the trench, along which one might walk without interfering with the soldier at work. The trench would extend for a very considerable distance, and even when it did end might be separated from the next by only a few yards of intervening ground. Every few yards along the back wall of the trench would be a recess for a non-commissioned officer. At still more lengthy intervals, of about 10 yards as a rule, were excavated passages, at right-angles to the trench, but running in zigzag fashion, communicating with another trench running behind and parallel with the trench we have just described. This second trench, which was constructed and occupied in the same way as the first, was in its turn connected by passages with a third parallel trench behind it, and this third trench was finally connected by passages with a base trench parallel with it behind, in the back wall of which were passages leading into resting chambers, popularly called dug-outs. In this base or special trench at the back would be found the officers in command of the unit, and machine guns so placed that they could be fired above the trenches in front. The whole of this complicated system of entrenchment was, as far as possible, covered entirely over in a fashion conformable to the particular features of the ground in which it was dug. The trenches at the back, however, with the machine guns, stood up perpendicularly behind those in front, but were nevertheless so carefully disguised by covers of grass, trees, crops, or other material as to give no indication whatever at any distance of either their presence or their significance. Here, too, in the trench at the back, was to be found not only the rest chambers, but the magazine for ammunition, the kitchens, and food stores. Behind yet again, at some considerable distance, were placed the artillery on positions which, like the rest of the whole construction, were disguised in such fashion that the guns were entirely concealed from the enemy.

These trenches, as originally constructed, had a certain degree of comfort and sanitation, often being cemented and drained so that at least the soldiers would be dry. The precise position of a trench being so lost by methods of concealment in the country at large, and being covered with a roof of earth and shingle, the soldiers ran very little risk of being shot. A shell falling in the near proximity of the trench could do very little more than cover the men inside with dust or mud. It was almost impossible for the shell itself to enter the trench, as not only was the opening to the trench nothing more than a mere line of a few inches, but this line, if discernible at all, could not be seen at a greater distance

than a few hundred yards. Artillery, therefore, could have very little certain effect on a trench. The most effective method of dealing with men in such trenches as those was for the belligerent entrenched opposite to seize whatever opportunity afforded to shoot at the inmates with his rifle.

The Allies were not long in learning whatever Germany could teach them in regard to the construction of trenches.

The French engineers immediately took the matter of entrenchments in hand, their officers carefully teaching the men to construct shelters on the lines of the Germans' works. From the commencement—and it is no matter of surprise that it should be so when we remember that the grand master of fortification, Vauban, was a Frenchman—the French trenches as eventually constructed were equal, if not superior, to those of the Germans. Advantage was taken of the fact that the Reserves and Territorials were made up of men representing every trade. And so trained excavators began to ply their pickaxes, agriculturists again took up their spades and forks, masons busied themselves with the trowel and cement, and woodcutters were everywhere cutting down trees with which carpenters and joiners made the supports and roofs for the trenches. Even painters and carvers found scope for their skill, glad to volunteer their efforts in decorating the dug-outs with topical pictures, generally some sort of caricature of the Kaiser or the work of his artillery. So not only the dug-outs became somewhat comfortable, but often ingenious improvements were made in the trenches themselves, as by so moulding the surface of the banquettes that they served when needed as a comfortable place for rest. The French army had no lack of the necessary tools. Each company of infantry carried with it 80 spades and 80 shovels, 8 hatchets, 12 hammers, 4 shears, a saw, and 25 crowbars. Moreover, two carts filled with tools of greater weight and larger size followed each company of infantry, each carrying 195 excavating tools, 19 crowbars, sledgehammers, and similar articles, and 50 spare tool handles and a chest of the more delicate tools of the handicraftsmen. In all these carts were also to be found large quantities of petards, detonators, and other articles of that class. The engineers, for their part, had 413 tools for each company and also thousands of spades, shovels, crowbars, hammers, sacks of earth, and cases of celonite for blowing up rocky obstacles. In addition to all these tools the army had the use, freely granted, of everything they might require which the people of the country possessed.

The great object in constructing trenches was to observe and to operate against the enemy and yet to remain invisible, and

accordingly when it was necessary for a man to move down the trench, he would have to proceed by crawling. Men were on duty in these trenches according to a very business-like system. As a rule they were required to stay three days in a trench of the first line, three days in a trench in reserve, and to leave the trenches altogether for the purposes of rest and rehabilitation for the succeeding three days. The first three days were always perhaps the most arduous and trying of the six. During the day the men could not under any circumstances leave their trenches, not even to communicate through the passages with the line behind. Nothing short of necessity, such as a more or less successful attack on the trench by the enemy, was accepted as an excuse for breach of this rule. At night the men were relieved, those staying for the night in the trenches not, as a rule, having to " work " so hard as those who occupied them during the day. A custom seemed to develop very early in the campaign, and to continue, as a general rule, under normal conditions, right through to the end, that each belligerent should refrain from aggression during the hours of darkness. Circumstances perhaps were the main reason for this custom, inasmuch as the darkness made it impossible for artillery or rifles to operate with any degree of exactitude. In the full light of the day itself, having regard to the high degree of perfection which the efforts of each belligerent to conceal his trenches had arrived at, it was only with great difficulty that either side could successfully operate against the other.

With the advent of dawn, however, the tranquillity of the night passed away. At once rose into the sky the captive balloons of both the French and the Germans, remaining there until sunset, the occupants, though subject all the time to the fire of the enemy, using their positions to observe the neighbourhood and advise the commanders of the operations in the trenches. As a rule, however, those balloons remained at so great a height above the earth that the firing to which they were subjected had little effect.

So during the day each belligerent in his line of trenches kept up a persistent observation of his opponent as well as an intermittent fire both of rifles and of artillery, the firing occasionally being very heavy ; and during the night, in comparative peace, the soldiers remained in their trenches mainly on watch, though for the most part, save the sentinels, smoking, talking, and even sleeping.

Such were the German and French trenches. Of a like character were those of the British, except that perhaps they were more systematic in their design, approximating somewhat to the German type, and were constructed by an army which was already pre-

pared for trench warfare, not only by training, but by experience in the field. As a rule the British trenches were in three parallel lines, the first or front the firing or operating line, the second the reserve, and the third—at the back—the base. About a mile or more behind these trenches would be placed the artillery, and yet another mile or more behind these guns would be found the siege guns. Directly in front of the trenches would be a line of trip wires and barbed-wire entanglements, similar entanglements being placed between the first and second line of trenches. An obstacle of this character might consist of anything from a single strand of wire arranged to trip men in the darkness or in long grass, to a 150-strand wire entanglement 30 ft. or more in width and 5 or 6 ft. in height. Not only would the wire be barbed, but dangling bells often would be fixed to it. On the enemy's side and within the entanglement broken glass, bottles, and odds and ends of tangled wire, would be well strewn, and the whole contrivance would be so constructed as to render it impossible for any man to creep through beneath it. The top wires, too, would be laid in irregular and slanting lines, so that any planks or ladders would topple over if an attempt were made in this fashion to climb over the top. Added to these arrangements would be a system of precaution against surprise in the shape of alarm guns and flares.

When training in time of peace the digging of trenches would be a matter of little difficulty. On the field of battle, however, the task would not be so easy and might, moreover, be very dangerous, for often the trench would have to be dug while the men at work were under the enemy's fire. As a rule, trenches were dug during the night, and even then, if the enemy had a suspicion that this work was going forward, he would throw out searchlights, and then, learning the position of our men, would concentrate on the spot a heavy fire. A work party so interrupted would thereupon have to throw themselves on to the ground for the time being, in December or January mud, snow, or frost perhaps, and there await a favourable opportunity to continue the work. The work would be commenced by the officers themselves going over the ground, planning the positions and lengths, and placing sticks, called "pickets," about a foot long in the earth at the corners and old empty tin cans by the pickets to indicate the direction that the trench was to take. The line of the trenches having thus been set out, the men would be brought on to the scene to dig under the direction of non-commissioned officers. One can imagine the character of work of this nature—not only laborious, but also uncomfortable and dangerous, the ground either soddened by rain or hardened almost to stone by

frost, and searchlights circling and bullets whizzing round the heads of the workers. Not only was smoking forbidden, but no man was allowed even to light a match.

In the daytime, too, it would often be necessary to undertake the work of digging the trenches. As a rule, day work of this character would take place at some distance from the enemy's position, and so beyond immediate danger from his fire, the entrenchments being part of an already predetermined plan. But often in the course of operations our troops would find it necessary to dig themselves in, and so gradually, without any sort of predetermined plan, frequently construct a system of deliberate entrenchment. Lying prone on ordinary soil, usually in sodden, miry earth or with a hard frozen crust of winter snow and ice on the surface, probably also under very heavy fire, each man would commence to use his grubber and form a furrow in which to lie. By constant work, extending perhaps over an hour, this furrow would develop into a pit so deep that his legs would by that time be out of danger from even shrapnel fire. Eventually the pit itself would become almost perfect as a simple trench for one man. Then, all the men in the same line having similarly entrenched themselves, a great advance would have been made towards the construction of one long trench. If the operations became such that the trench was likely to be occupied for any length of time, such improvements would be made as would convert this hasty entrenchment into a deliberately perfected trench.

Notwithstanding that in theory a trench might be constructed on both sanitary and comfortable lines, yet in fact, during the whole time that the Allies lay entrenched during the winter of 1914–15 in the north of France, the troops engaged in the trenches were subjected to discomforts and hardships, quite apart from the dangers necessarily incidental to warfare, of the most extreme character. The heavy rains, the snow, and the frost all combined to make the trenches the least desirable habitation imaginable.

Wherever possible the troops resting for the time from trench work were billeted in quarters in the neighbourhood, proceeding to the trenches to relieve their comrades at night-time. Very frequently these billets were a considerable distance away, and the journey from the billets to the trenches would often be a lengthy, hazardous, and also romantic undertaking. There would be a long tramp in the dark over country roads with which the men had very little acquaintance, subject often to attack from the enemy and generally—in fact, it seems to have been the usual experience—it would be raining very hard, there would be a bitter,

driving wind which would beat the faces of the men with whip-like sharpness, and the roads, used as they had been for so long by heavy and continuous traffic, would be knee-deep in heavy mud. Struggling for miles under such circumstances as these, a relief party would subsequently arrive at a spot near which they knew a communication trench would start from the roadway across the fields and open ground to the system of trenches towards which they were making their way. With some difficulty in the darkness, the rain, and the mud, this trench would be found—an occasional match would be furtively lighted in order to discover it. Once found, the men would enter the communication trench and proceed through it in single file, led by their officers. Waist-deep in slush and water, sometimes these trenches being almost full, the only satisfactory feature in the progress through the communication trench would be that because of its low station as compared with the road the men would be more free from danger from the enemy's bullets. Nevertheless, their progress at the best would be an heroic struggle, encumbered as the men were with a very heavy equipment, made all the heavier and more uncomfortable by its saturation with rain and a thick, slimy, and offensive coating of mud and dirt. Half frozen, the men would at length arrive at the far trenches. Here, joyfully and with remarkable alacrity, the men relieved would hail their advent and themselves prepare for what was to them the comparatively pleasant journey through the same communication trench home to their billets. The joy, it will be noticed, was entirely on the side of those relieved.

Once in the trenches, and having taken the places of the men who were now blithely plodding through the miry communication trench, the men would be allotted positions by their officers, all except those placed on guard being doubtful whether to go to sleep or merely to keep awake, or to venture upon a look over the parapet. The enemy's trenches would probably be only fifty to a hundred yards away from those of the Allies, our trenches being fronted and protected by barbed-wire entanglements. This being the position, those who were placed on sentry duty would be required to keep their ears open and to fire occasionally, in one-hour shifts. The others would dispose of themselves as comfortably as circumstances would allow, prepared, however, to resist an attack if made.

During the daytime, life in the trenches would be more interesting. The men might be in the midst of high-explosive shells, falling fortunately a few yards outside the trench and never getting into it. But sometimes the enemy might be more successful, and a lyddite shell might fall plumb into the trench. Meanwhile, our

men too would be shooting, and occasionally one might be shot. The enemy's trenches being so close to ours, it would be possible for our men to see every movement of theirs, and every effort would be made by the men on each side to send a bullet through one on the other. It was remarkable how the lengthy experience in the trenches developed in the men an almost uncanny appreciation, from sound alone, of the possibilities of an enemy's shot. If the note of a passing projectile was sharp, it was known that nothing would happen, for the shell would drop too far away, but if the note was dull it was known that the shell would burst soon and near, and accordingly a rush would at once be made for shelter.

The great discomfort of trench life was not so much the mud and water, the snow and the frost, as the fact that it was often impossible for the men to change their clothes for a very considerable period. Where there could be no billeting outside the trenches, or a regular system of reliefs, and the men had to remain the whole time in the trenches, it was possible for the soldiers to remain a week or even a fortnight without a proper change or cleansing. For a week or more there might be no opportunity even to take one's boots off, the result being that when opportunity did offer they had to be cut off. One day in February a man discovered, on taking off his boots, that a bullet had pierced one of them and two pairs of socks and was lying embedded immediately next to his foot. His foot had been so cold that he had not noticed this when it occurred. So many a man discovered that he had been hit on the body by a spent bullet, which had actually pierced his clothing, and yet at the time he had no knowledge of it. But, however unfortunate the position may have been from the point of view of clothing and uncleanliness, yet it is a remarkable and satisfactory fact that there never was any occasion to be dissatisfied with either the quality or the quantity of the food which was supplied to the men, and, except for the fact that changing was difficult, the clothing itself was quite satisfactory, always being warm and sufficient. Food was abundant. The first thing in the morning there would be plenty of hot coffee; soon afterwards there would be a breakfast with unlimited eggs, bacon, bread, butter, marmalade, and tea or coffee; at dinner-time there would be an abundance of well-cooked meat and vegetables. So good and abundant was the Allies' provisioning that it was said at the time that many Germans allowed themselves to be made prisoners by the British if only to escape their starvation rations and obtain something satisfactory to eat.

As trench warfare was itself very largely a revival of old

methods, so it brought with it an incidental revival of old weapons of offence. The rifles and machine guns which each side used in firing from the trenches, and the heavier artillery, including even siege guns, which each side also used from a distance behind its entrenchments in order to destroy the entrenchments of its opponent, were found not to make up everything that might usefully be used in this class of conflict, and so hand grenades, mortars, and other weapons of bygone days came once more into their own. Sapping, too, became a feature of the operations. One of the belligerents, it might be the British, would decide to make an attack from their trench upon the trench in front of them. The British soldiers would accordingly excavate a tunnel at right-angles from their trench in the direction of the enemy's trench. This would be a long and difficult business. One man would gradually burrow forward in the intended direction, and as he proceeded would be followed closely by another, so that eventually a long underground passage would be constructed, filled with men creeping through it in single file. Having arrived at what appeared to be an appropriate spot, the leader of the file would throw up the earth above his head, and being, as he should be, within near distance of the enemy's trench, would hurl into it a grenade, following his attack up by leaping out of the tunnel with his file of men behind him with the view to assaulting the enemy at close quarters with the bayonet, and so clearing and capturing the trench. This, in fact, was the object of all these operations—to capture the enemy's trenches.

Sapping, however, which was also carried on by open passages, was not by any means the invariable procedure. An effort might be made to assault the enemy's trench by an overground surprise attack and so capture it. Such an attack would be feasible after a more than usually successful rifle fire from our trenches, or some particularly extensive devastation of the enemy caused by our artillery. The enemy's trench once taken and occupied, an effort would be made by the latter to retake it, sometimes successfully, sometimes not. Once a trench had been well taken and completely held, it might be possible for the Allies to advance their line to include the captured trench. In this manner, for seven autumn and winter months, did the Allies and the Germans struggle against one another, often to obtain only a few yards' advantage. In this manner, too, was it alone possible for the Allies during this period to make any advance towards the reoccupation of Belgium and that territory in the north of France which was in the occupation of the enemy.

The struggle which continued for seven of these cold and

weary months, before the French could finally capture Priest's Wood, is an instance of this class of warfare.

In September the French were in front of the outskirts of the forest, and ever after, throughout the whole of the winter, continual fighting was there taking place. Slowly but surely they advanced under cover of the trees in the work of sapping, never for one day allowing the attacks of their offensive to slacken in vigour. At no time could the enemy obtain the ascendancy. Whenever the French lost ground that they had previously won, a renewed attack contrived to carry them beyond the ground gained in the first instance.

The wood was finally captured after nine engagements of the bloodiest character, one of the most deadly taking place on January 17. Thus, after five months' work, the result attained was the capture of 450 yards of first-line trenches. A month later, on February 15, the second line of the trenches was captured, and a fortnight afterwards a strongly-fortified blockhouse seized. The enemy then vigorously and persistently counter-attacked, launching against the French not only an endless storm of hand grenades, but even an enormous quantity of aerial torpedoes, finally dynamiting our ally's trenches. But the afternoon of the same day of the dynamite attack, March 15, the French infantry, with an almost unbelievable dogged pluck, succeeded, in the face of a continued fire of the enemy, in re-instating themselves on the ruins of their earthworks. The final phase necessitated the destruction of a subterranean fort by the French artillery, the position being then seized at the point of the bayonet, the soldiers of France charging magnificently and irresistibly.

An epic, surely. And yet only a fight for an advance of a few hundred yards along a front of 450 yards—with hundreds of miles of advance yet to be made before the Huns could be thrown back into their own country, and to be made, too, along a front of about 500 miles.

And this slight advance occupied seven months, and involved the death of hundreds of brave men, and yet was undertaken of set purpose—the result to be attained was regarded as worth the great cost.

One of the old-fashioned weapons, the use of which was revived by trench warfare, was the hand grenade, a bomb intended to be thrown by hand at the enemy. Only the older officers of the British army had had any exact training or experience in the use of this weapon. Immediately, however, the war developed on the lines it did, especially as the enemy, anticipating a long struggle

in trenches, had furnished himself with grenades, the Allies without any difficulty brought up to date their old knowledge and experience and were prepared to reply to the enemy with a weapon of like character. The grenade could be used only when the trenches were within throwing distance of one another, or in the case of an assault on a trench or of a sapping onslaught. The ingenuity of the Allies, however, soon improved upon the method of throwing by hand. The Germans had invented a bomb-gun or thrower which was capable of projecting a bomb for a distance of about a couple of hundred yards. A bomb so thrown would explode only when it struck the ground, and consequently unless it fell inside a trench it could do very little if any damage at all: as a fact, the bombs thrown in this manner invariably fell outside the trenches. Necessity being the mother of invention, the Allies invented on the spot a thrower of their own design—an iron drain-pipe was rigged up as a gun and was found to be capable of throwing a hand grenade a distance equal to or greater than that at which the Germans could shoot their bombs. The drain-pipe was soon abandoned for the catapult—found eventually to be a most efficacious instrument—and for a specially designed gun, the bomb being fitted with a time fuse so that it should explode in the air about 12 ft. above the ground. With these weapons the Allies, and particularly the British, did great execution in the trenches of the enemy. Though perfect accuracy was impossible, yet, by reason of the bombs bursting in the air, the operation was saved from the ineffectiveness of the German bomb. Should the explosion take place over a German saphead or look-out post, then there could be no doubt that the bomb would account for a considerable number of the enemy. At night-time the firing of these bombs had an effect very similar to that of a firework display. A "gun" would be fired from the bottom of a trench, and the bomb, a fiery object, could be seen shooting slowly and deliberately up into the air, describing a semicircle while emitting a trail of red sparks, and descending on to the top of its objective, exploding just above it with a tremendous noise.

In firing from a trench with a rifle it was generally only possible to have any substantial effect if the shot struck the head or upper part of the body of some unfortunate German who might have exposed himself to the fire of the trenches of the Allies in the front aperture of his trench. This spot could not, of course, be reached by a shell, nor could even rifle shots do any execution in an open trench, by reason of the fact that any projectile, in order to enter the trench, must descend upon it from a height above. The old-fashioned mortar, accordingly, came into vogue once more, being

capable of projecting a shell at a high angle, so that if accurately directed it would drop into a trench. The shells fired from howitzers, having a somewhat steep angle of descent, also were more effective in the trenches than the shot of a field gun.

An instrument hitherto unknown in land warfare but introduced in this struggle between the opposing trenches was the trench periscope. In this case too it would seem that the Germans were prepared for the particular necessities incidental to operating in entrenchment. The idea of the periscope was that an observer in the trenches could see what was being done by the enemy without himself looking over his parapet and so exposing himself to any danger. The British periscope consisted, generally, of a box of wood 4 in. wide and 2 ft. 6 in. long, with a little square of looking-glass 4 in. square at either end. Holding the periscope in a perpendicular position so that the mirror at the top overlooked the landscape in front, the observer by looking into the looking-glass at the bottom could see reflected the landscape pictured on the top mirror, and thus obtain a good, steady view of the country in front of his trench, as well as keep his head in perfect safety below the parapet. The only disadvantage was that the periscope itself was visible to the enemy, who might shoot at and so destroy it. On one occasion at least this did happen, and the operator was covered with splinters and got some powdered glass in his eye. It was not, however, always wise for either side to shoot at a periscope, for it had its use to the other inasmuch as the latter could take advantage of the space in which it was operated as a peephole into the trench.

Though on entering the trenches the soldiers knew that in so doing they were deliberately running the danger of almost certain loss of life, yet, nevertheless, their days were not passed without a certain amount of liveliness and even enjoyment. The ineffective marksmanship on the part of the men in the trenches of the enemy, or even the bursting of a shell in the neighbourhood of their trench without harm resulting to any one of their number, was readily made the subject of infinite pleasantries, and in the midst of what was in fact a persistent bombardment the inhabitants of a trench might be passing their time in games of cards and even of chess. Some, though, would be writing letters, and others—for the ranks of the Allies were composed of all sorts and conditions of men—might be drawing sketches or writing impressions of their experiences. The best would be made of the dug-outs. One, the retreat of the officers, might be dignified with the style of club and labelled outside with such a title as the "Isthmian Club"; others would have boards in front bearing signs such as the "Grand

Hotel" or "Lockhart's." In trenches which had been long established, and in which consequently it had been possible to burrow a considerable number of dug-outs and to give some care to their fitment, there would be found to be established bath-rooms and even barbers' shops. In some of the French trenches newspapers even were published, as, for instance, the *French Gazette* or the *Argonne Echo*, often having some special title which would advertise its pretensions to be the best medium for news in the district. These journals were generally well written and well illustrated, and were produced by multicopying machines and circulated amongst the inhabitants of the neighbouring trenches. There was never any lack of news, even though it might be only the tale of some fireworks display, as it would be called, with which they had been treated by the enemy. The monotony of trench life was also very frequently and satisfactorily relieved by parcels of presents which were constantly arriving from England and Paris. Pipes, tobacco, gloves, scarfs, woollen vests, and so forth were always in great favour, and much interest and excitement would be aroused by their distribution. There were also their prisoners to be looked after, for no trench considered itself to be perfectly equipped unless it had under its hospitable roof a certain number of German prisoners. As a rule the prisoners settled down very comfortably with their captors, leaving the impression, if not stating explicitly, that they preferred to be in the trenches of the Allies, even as prisoners, to remaining with their own army, where food was scarce, clothing inadequate, and discipline brutal. Concerts in the evening were also of frequent occurrence. In some trenches, certainly in some of the French, there were even pianos, but no trench was without a gramophone, and all men had, or could have if they wished, a mouth organ. And here and there in the possession of different men could be found examples of almost all the smaller musical instruments. So provided with instruments, soldiers as a class being notoriously capable and enthusiastic vocalists, it is not difficult to believe that the concerts were scenes of enjoyment so great that the hardships and dangers of their lives were for the time being completely forgotten by the soldiers. On occasions, where possible, the trenches would be visited by some good-natured company of professional artistes, when, in a central building, quite a high-class concert or variety theatrical entertainment would be given. Quite a tour around a part of the entrenched area was made by a company of leading English artistes.

The trenches of the belligerents being so close to one another, and the men who occupied them on either side remaining so long

in the same position, it is not to be wondered at that when not actually engaged in conflict some sort of spirit of friendly regard should have sprung up between them. It would be foolish to believe all the tales that were told at the time of the friendly intercourse between the Allies and Germany; there could be no doubt, however, that a friendly intercourse did exist on occasion to a certain extent. There would be times when either side would allow men of the enemy's trenches to come out into the open between the two lines and take some exercise without any sort of interference. On the other hand—and yet perhaps it might have been some evidence of friendly spirit—the two sides would fire upon one another, or upon one of their number, for the slightest reason. On one occasion it was said that a calf happened to stray down between the trenches, and a French soldier left his trench to bring him in. The Germans thereupon fired upon the French, who replied, the soldier, however, continuing without any show of fear to endeavour to catch the calf. Eventually he did so, taking the animal out of the danger zone, and re-entered his trench. The battle ceased at once. A similar battle once occurred on an occasion when a German left his trench to recover a stray pig. But more frequently, when instances such as these occurred, both sides would be likely to co-operate.

CHAPTER XX

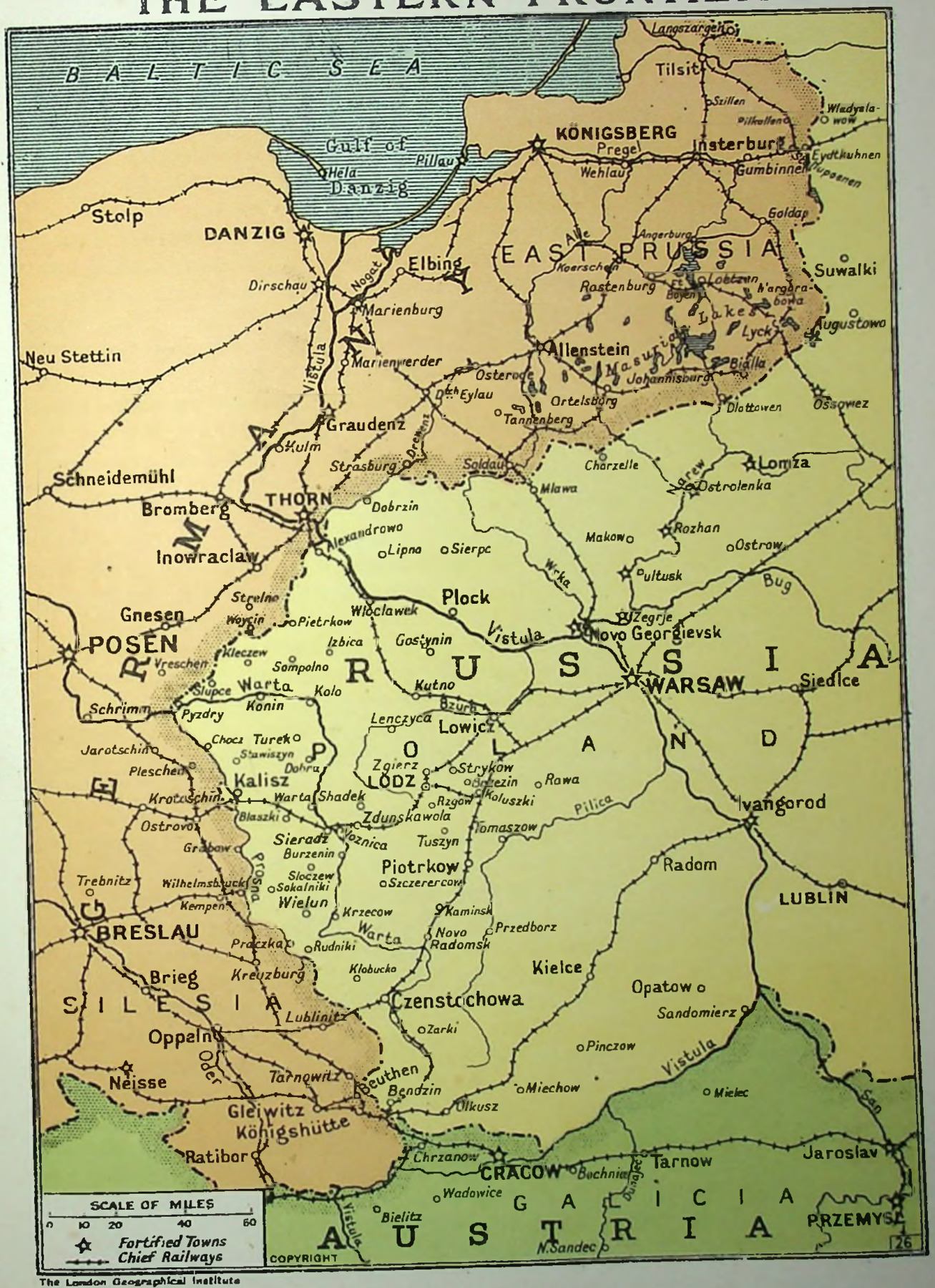
RUSSIA ENTERS THE FIELD

Kaiser declares war against Russia—Czar's manifesto to his people—Germany attempts to justify her action—The Austro-German forces—Their superiority over Russian—The Kaiser's plans—Thwarted by the Russian plans to invade Eastern Prussia and Galicia—Difference between the two plans—General von Hindenburg commands German army in Eastern Prussia—His study of the strategic possibilities of the Mazurian region—The Mazurian Lakes—Russia begins her advance—Eydtkuhnen—Stallupoenen—Austria invades Russian Poland—Middle of August—Czar's proclamation to the Poles—Russia continues advance to the Vistula—Germans make a stand at Szillen-Gumbinnen-Goldap—Heroism of Osnas—Germans pushed back to Gumbinnen—Great German retreat Pilkallen-Goldap—Tilsit occupied—Also Angerberg and Korschen—Königsberg invested—Three days' battle at Osterode-Allenstein-Tannenberg-Soldau—German victory at Tannenberg—Russians thrown into Mazurian swamps—Russian retreat.

WE must return once more to the early days of August, when Germany, in flagrant disregard of treaty obligations and the rights of smaller nations, was violating the territory of Luxembourg and Belgium and initiating her devastating progress through the latter country. In those days, on August 1, the Kaiser in his pride peremptorily declared war against Russia on the plea that the protective measures Russia was then taking, and which events fully justified, were in fact a menace to Germany. Almost simultaneously the Czar published a striking and eloquent manifesto to the Russian peoples, placing on record his belief that now war with Germany was imminent all interior discord would be forgotten, that the unity which had hitherto existed between him and his people would become yet more fast, and that Russia, rising as one man, would repel the insolent attack of the enemy with a profound belief in the justice of her work and with a humble hope in an all-powerful Providence.

On the following day, August 2, Germany issued a public statement with a view to justifying her conduct before the world, in which she alleged—but falsely as it subsequently appeared—that Russia had on the day before the declaration of war unlawfully and with hostile intent invaded German territory at various points. This statement had not, however, the effect on the civilised world that Germany had anticipated, for civilisation could not overlook the contemporary fact that Germany herself

THE EASTERN FRONTIER.



The London Geographical Institute

had undoubtedly and without reason, deliberately and ruthlessly, violated the territories of Belgium, Luxembourg, and France.

Germany had a very practical reason in thus declaring war against Russia so quickly, for she knew that her only hope of success against the Russian Empire lay in a sudden attack upon its frontiers before the Russian mobilisation could be completed. It was common knowledge that Russia could not mobilise in less time than a month ; her territories were so vast and her population so great, and her road and railway communications so slightly developed. The Russian frontier adjoining Germany and Austria extended along a length of about 1,500 miles. On the Russian side there was practically nothing in the way of strategic or any other sort of railways enabling the speedy concentration of an army upon the frontier. On the other side of that line, however, Germany, and Austria under the influence of Germany, had for many years past been proceeding on the same lines as Germany had adopted against the Belgian and the French frontiers. The whole extent of that frontier line on the Austro-German side had been fortified by a remarkable boulevard of railways so laid that great masses of troops could be thrown from the interior on to the frontier, at all points throughout its length, without any delay whatever. The armies of Germany and Austria, at the commencement of these operations, were almost completely mobilised—at least they were mobilised to an extent sufficient immediately to open offensive operations against Russia everywhere except on the Eastern Prussian frontier. Austria-Hungary had an army of three and a half million men, well furnished with extraordinarily powerful artillery, almost completely ready for operations against Russia, a relatively small part only being engaged against the Serbians, and Germany had about half a million men already in the field and nearly two millions more in course of organisation. Under these circumstances, therefore, the war opened as between Russia, on the one hand, and Germany and Austria on the other—for Austria formally declared war against Russia on August 6—with every advantage on the side of the enemy Allies.

The one great strength of Russia was, as it always had been, her great extent of territory and the absence of means thereon for an invading army, as soon as it had penetrated well into the interior, to find provisionment and to maintain its lines of communication. Russia could, accordingly, at the opening of the war, have remained safely and confidently quiescent until the completion of her mobilisation, when, if the enemy had penetrated

far into her interior, he would have been very largely at the mercy of the Russian army.

But Russia, possessing—as her people always have possessed to a remarkable degree—an instinct of noble generosity and for heavy sacrifice, deemed it her duty, notwithstanding the then inadequacy of her own armies, so to act, by at once invading German territory, as to force the Kaiser to concentrate large bodies of armed forces on the Russian or eastern side of his operations, thus depleting the forces at his disposal against the Allies in the west, and also preventing Austria dispatching troops to that quarter. So while Germany was advancing through Belgium preparing for her attack on Liége, Russia began her great advance into enemy territory.

The Kaiser had entered into the war relying entirely on, and fully confident in, the idea that during the weeks or month which Russia would necessarily take to complete her mobilisation and so become an effective enemy, he would be able to swoop down upon and annihilate an unprepared France, and then, having accomplished that, transfer his forces to the east and deal with Russia without any sort of hindrance on the side of France. The plan which Russia was now adopting was destined to frustrate absolutely the realisation of these hopes of the Kaiser. Russia, as we have already said, within a day or two of the declaration of war began to advance against the territory of the enemy, thus keeping Germany more than fully occupied on her eastern frontier and unable to carry out to the full her original plans against France.

The plan of campaign decided upon by Russia was simultaneously to invade German territory, through Eastern Prussia, with one army, and Austrian territory, through Galicia, with another. The operation in Galicia was intended to be a strong, serious, and successful effort to reach and occupy the heart of the enemy's country, while that in Eastern Prussia was designed mainly as a blow which might or might not be successful, but yet would, under any circumstances, withdraw important German forces from action in Belgium and on the French frontier, and also from the assistance of the Austrians in Galicia. As we shall see, the plan of the Austro-German Allies, based on the assumption that the Russian mobilisation would make such little progress during the first weeks of August that no Russian army of any account would be in the field during that period, contemplated a strong and successful invasion of Russian Poland from Galicia by Austria, entailing, to deal with it, a concentration of all available Russian forces in that region, and so the freedom of the Eastern Prussian frontier from any fear of Russian attack. This Austro-German plan

THE EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA.

The aged Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria, because of the peaceful conditions which have been forced upon him during the last few years, has acquired in countries distant from the influence of his dynasty a reputation for peaceful wishes and principles which he is far from deserving. He has been called "great" and "good." He is not and never has been either.

would give the Kaiser all the men he wanted in his attack on France, and permit him to leave Eastern Prussia protected by a very inadequate force. As a fact, the mobilisation of the army of the Czar proceeded far more speedily than Germany had imagined possible. The result was that not only were the plans of the Kaiser found to be radically ill-conceived, but the development of those of the Czar was very substantially assisted by circumstances.

The invasion of Eastern Prussia was to be carried out on two lines—one, the northern, under General Rennenkampf, to cross the frontier along a line which would pass through Eydtkuhnen on the frontier, thence to Stallupoenen and Insterberg, and then on to the great fortified city of Königsberg; and the other, under General Samsonov, to cross the frontier along the line Augustov-Ossowez, thence along the south of the Mazurian Lakes and so into the interior by Allenstein and Tannenberg to the Vistula at Thorn.

The invasion of Galicia was also to be carried out on two lines—one under General Brussilov and the other under General Ivanov, and, later on, by a third army under General Ruzsky, each of which was to progress from Lublin across the frontier towards Lemberg as the first objective.

There was one great difference, however, between these two plans of invasion—the one in the north had to deal with a Germany very largely unprepared to meet this sudden and unexpected move on the part of Russia, while the one in the south had to deal with an enemy who was so well prepared that he had taken time by the forelock and had already, before the plan could be very far realised, invaded Russian territory for a considerable distance.

We now will deal with the invasion of Eastern Prussia.

Here the German armies were under the command of General von Hindenburg. From the enemy's point of view, this commander was the right man in the right place. Moreover, he was probably the only general in any of the contesting armies who, actually a strategic genius, had, in the early days of the war, the one opportunity of all others that he desired, and was able to seize it with brilliant success.

When called to command, in actual warfare, the German forces in Eastern Prussia, he was an aged man who, after a long experience in important positions in the German army, had for some time been in retirement. Though the positions he had previously held were important, yet they had never been such as gave him commanding social and professional distinction. In a sense, therefore, his attainment of this high command, at so

critical a moment, was the realisation of an ambition which, for probably very many years, he had regarded as beyond his reach. The reason for his appointment is no doubt to be found in the fact that he had specialised in the strategic and tactical possibilities of the region of the Mazurian Lakes.

The Mazurian Lakes and their neighbourhood were regarded by Germany as, in that neighbourhood, a formidable if not impregnable barrier against invasion by Russia across the frontier of Eastern Prussia. Joined up as the lakes were with the strongly fortified city of Königsberg by the rivers Angerap, Pregel, and Alle, the whole of the country of Eastern Prussia, from the eastern along the southern frontiers to the Vistula—on which latter river were the fortifications of Thorn, Graudenz, and Dantzig—may well have been viewed by Russia as absolutely impassable, unless overrun by an immensely overwhelming force commanded by generals with special and exact knowledge of the character of the country. But Russia was to attempt this invasion, not only without a sufficient force and without adequate knowledge of the lakes and their district, but also notwithstanding that the operation would necessarily be along a line outside the main lines of Russian communication.

The main line of movement into Germany should have been through Warsaw on to Berlin—that is to say, if Russian facilities for military concentration, advance, support, reinforcement, and provisionment had been the determining factor, and if the invading army had been sufficiently strong to deal with Austrian and German assaults on its flanks from the south and north.

But, succeed or fail, Russia had determined to invade Eastern Prussia and negotiate the region of the lakes.

The Mazurian Lakes, some of them very extensive sheets of still, silent water, were scattered—almost innumerably—all over the southern part of Eastern Prussia—from the frontier on the east to the River Vistula on the west. In some districts they were small and well separated, but generally they were of more or less considerable size, situated in a country thickly wooded in some parts, and in others having nothing but bog and swamp. Often would be found a stretch of cultivated country, and here and there a town, and also—and in this lay concealed a frightful menace to an invading army without knowledge of the region—a surface of apparently firm ground, but which was in fact nothing but bottomless bog.

The whole of this country—water, bog, forest, fields, villages, and towns—was so distributed by nature and man in an indescribable and non-understandable intermingling. For movement

across it only two means were safely available to the stranger —the roads and the railways. These, however, were very scarce and far between. Of all countries, therefore, this would be amongst the worst for the advance of a great invading army with its hosts of men and immense train of heavy artillery.

The lakes took their name from the province of Mazuria in which they were situated, and which was once a part of Poland. The Mazurians, however, were not exactly Poles, though ethnically closely allied. As a fact they were always less civilised than the Poles, but, clinging obstinately to their ancient customs and prejudices, they proudly regarded the Poles as inferior to themselves. In this they most probably laboured under some delusion, for only a few generations since the Mazurians were yet living the life of troglodytes, feeding chiefly upon very poor potatoes. It has been said that they were always very great drunkards, their infant children even being brought up on vodka. But no doubt the Prussian Government put an end to this before the days of the great war. Their speech is a corrupt form of the Polish language, held in great contempt by the educated Poles themselves, though the Mazurians reciprocate the feeling by contempt for the Poles and admiration and esteem for the Germans.

Now General von Hindenburg, when in active service in the German army, had made a careful study at manœuvres of the strategic and tactical opportunities of the lakes and the surrounding country. When commanding on these occasions he had always devoted his energy to an effort to force his opposing armies into the lakes, swamps, bogs, and wooded areas of the Mazurian region so that they might ultimately lie completely at the mercy of his own men. Time after time, manœuvre after manœuvre, he had done this, always successfully. It had even become notorious among the soldiers required to form an army opposed to him, that, struggle as they would, under the command of perhaps their most brilliant generals, yet their fate was certain—they would find themselves and their guns at the close of the manœuvre struggling helplessly, unable to extricate themselves from the swamps. Each of these soldiers would know, before he started his day's work, that he would finish it with absolute certainty up to the arms in mud and water. On his retirement, so obsessed was von Hindenburg with the problem of the region of the lakes, that he acquired a property in the neighbourhood and went there to reside. Using the men in his employ, and cannon and material which were his own property, he would spend the whole of his time in manœuvring in these swamps.

The solution of the problem of the swamps, regarded as one

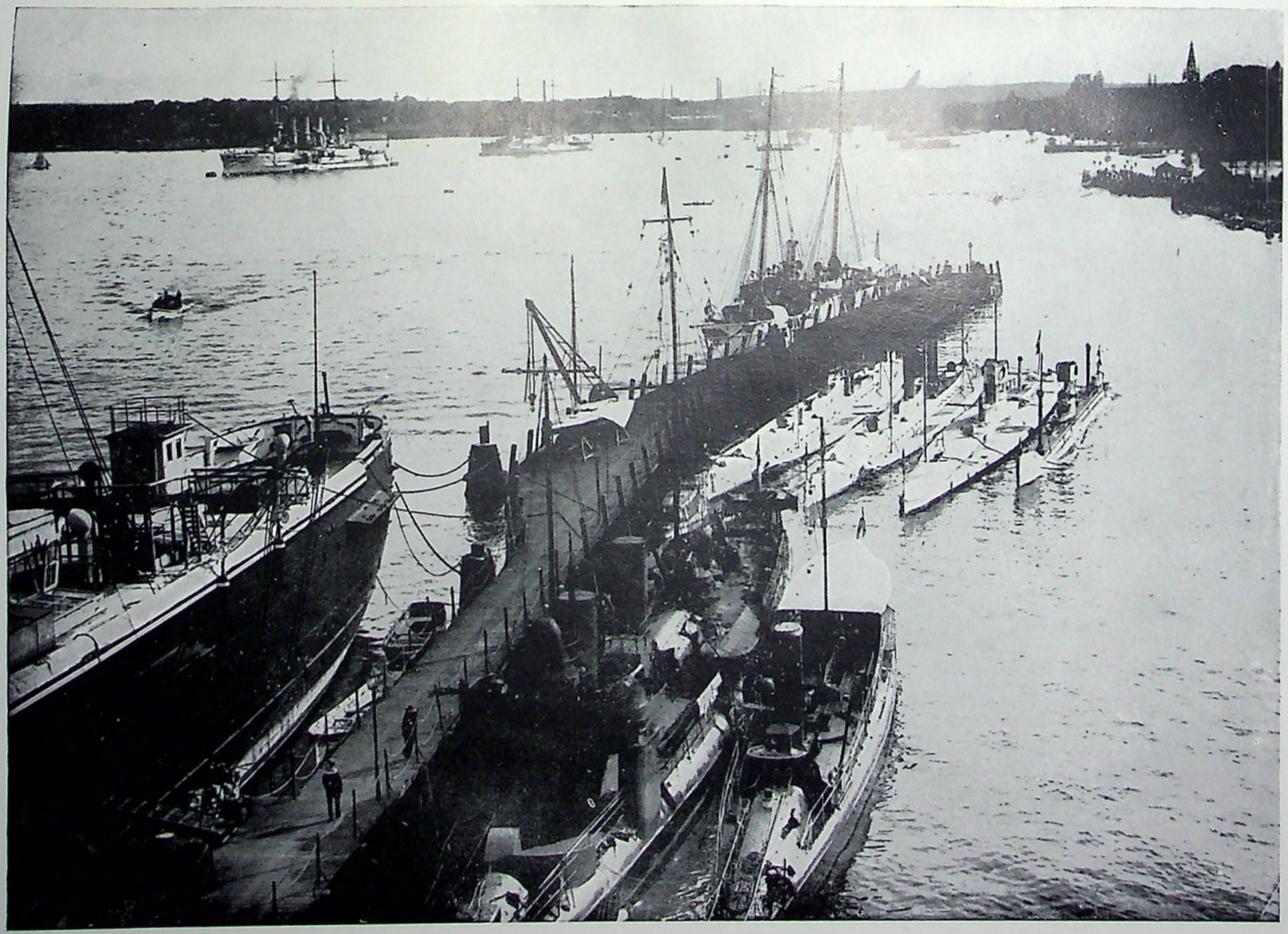
of Eastern Prussia's greatest natural defences, had thus become the one absorbing interest of his life. It was only fitting, therefore, that this man should, at this momentous time, be called upon by the Kaiser to assume the command of the German army in this region and lead it, if possible, to victory against the advancing Russians.

Forthwith upon the declaration of war, Russia, in pursuance of the plans already described, initiated her offensive operations against Eastern Prussia. The invasion of that country was accomplished by two columns or armies, the one moving along the south being known as the Army of the Narew, having approached the frontier, at Prostken, from the River Narew. The German army, under General von Hindenburg, was at this moment established on the eastern bank of the River Vistula, with a strength of about 160,000 men, and was for the time only a nucleus in process of collecting its full forces. It was not until about the middle of August that von Hindenburg got together about 400,000 men, and, with this numerically powerful army, was at length in a position to take decisive steps against the invader. The Russian army was about 300,000 strong.

The consequence of this state of affairs was that the eastern German frontier was defended at first only by small forces of men. One can, therefore, readily understand the initial success of the Russians, and particularly the success of their early operations in the region of the Mazurian Lakes.

At first, from the 4th to the 6th of August, during which time the Russian outposts and patrols arrived at the frontier, though there was constant fighting between these and the small German forces they found there, the Russians were able to establish themselves on the outlying German territory. Then, within a very few days, an advance body of the Russian forces having come up, they were successful in occupying Eydtkuhnen in face of but very little resistance, and thence to advance north of the Mazurian Lakes on to Stallupoenen, a town they took possession of after a sharp but successful fight with the Germans. To the south of the lakes, Samsonov, advancing towards the north-west, made an easy capture of Lyck, thence pushing on to Lötzen, occupying that town after a successful encounter with the Germans, and even proceeding as far as and occupying the town of Johannisberg. These two armies were now joined together across Mazuria by a strong body of Cossacks, and henceforth operated as one great army.

The middle of August arrived, and none too quickly for the Germans. Von Hindenburg's army was at length in great strength,



KIEL HARBOUR.

The headquarters of the German Navy contains the Imperial shipbuilding yards, slips, dry and wet docks and is the seat of the Imperial Naval Academy. The town lies at the head of a deep inlet on the Baltic end of the Kiel Canal.

and the Russians, whose success so far had been greater than they had expected, or even designed, had for some days arrested their advance, awaiting reinforcements and anticipating the more decisive encounters with the enemy which must soon take place. At this, quite the psychological moment, when the Russians had just advanced into Eastern Prussia, and, as we shall see later, the Austrians had invaded Russian Poland, the Czar issued his famous proclamation to the Poles. On August 15 the Grand Duke Nicholas, on behalf of the Czar, solemnly promised to a Poland which should be reunited after the war an autonomy under the suzerainty of the Monarch of all the Russias. The great historical importance and interest of this proclamation more than justifies its reproduction here:

Poles! The hour has sounded when the sacred dream of your fathers and your grandfathers may be realised. A century and a half has passed since the living body of Poland was torn in pieces, but the soul of the country is not dead. It continues to live, inspired by the hope that there will come for the Polish people an hour of resurrection and of fraternal reconciliation with Great Russia. The Russian army brings you the solemn news of this reconciliation, which obliterates the frontiers dividing the Polish peoples, which it unites conjointly under the sceptre of the Russian Czar. Under this sceptre Poland will be born again, free in her religion and her language. Russian autonomy only expects from you the same respect for the rights of those nationalities to which history has bound you. With open heart and brotherly hand Great Russia advances to meet you. She believes that the sword with which she struck down her enemies at Grünwald is not yet rusted. From the shores of the Pacific to the North Sea the Russian armies are marching. The dawn of a new life is beginning for you, and in this glorious dawn is seen the sign of the Cross, the symbol of suffering and of the resurrection of peoples.

For considerably more than a century the Polish question had been one of the most burning of the political problems of Europe. Once an independent and powerful State, Poland for very many years had been dismembered, its parts being distributed between Germany, Russia, and Austria—a transaction which had had the unhappy result of binding together these three Powers, if only to prevent the development of an independent Polish nationalism. But the day had now come when Russia, having decisively parted ways with her two old-standing colleagues, was in a position to do justice to the people who for so long had lain at the mercy of foreign and tyrannical overlords. Russia was singular among this trio of Powers in having always in the depths of her soul a desire that the Poles—a great Slav people—should attain some sort of freedom instead of continuing at the mercy of Powers of whom

two were non-Slav and whose great aim was absolute repression and extinction of Polish individuality and nationality.

That Russia should have issued this proclamation was accordingly not a great surprise to those who knew best her political ideals with regard to the Slav people generally, and the Poles in particular; but at the same time the proclamation had, and was no doubt intended to have, an effect very advantageous to the interests of Russia in the war. Every one knew that it would bind the Russian Poles to the cause of Russia with bonds of impregnable strength, for the objects of Russia's fight would now include the particular aims of the Russian Poles themselves. Moreover it was bound to create a deep sympathy with Russia and her efforts on the part of the peoples of Prussian Poland and Austrian Poland. It was even expected, not only by Russia, but by the world—outside Germany and Austria, of course—that one of the immediate results of the proclamation would be a revolt in Prussia and Austria. As a fact, however, there was no such revolt. Certainly, during the first month of the war, one or two Slav and Czech regiments in the Austrian army gave sign of mutiny, but immediately, with bloody promptitude, these were almost entirely annihilated by their Austrian Commanders, and Slav and Czech soldiers very largely distributed among Austrian and Magyar units. That incident may be said to have constituted the beginning and the end of anything in the shape of a determined Polish revolt in the dominions of the Kaiser and the Dual Monarch. Nevertheless, though effective revolt was impossible, the Polish people of Austrian and Prussian Poland now eagerly desired and anticipated the victory of Russia, were equally ready to receive the Russian troops in their advance through Galicia, and only too pleased to give them what information they could as to the movements and the plans of their own lords.

Knowing, however, what we do of the national prejudice of the Mazurians—debased Poles that they were—it is not surprising to learn that the proclamation had no effect at all valuable to the Russians during the course of the operations in Eastern Prussia. Not only had the Russians there to deal with the great natural obstacles of the region, but even with the persistent espionage of the Mazurians, who strained every effort to retard and render difficult the advance of the Russian army, whilst at the same time they reported its every movement to von Hindenburg.

On or about August 15, having obtained large and increasing reinforcements, the Russians renewed their advance. Their

main objective now was to clear and occupy Eastern Prussia as far as the Vistula, to invest Königsberg during their progress, and, having reached the river, to reduce the great fortresses of Dantzig, Graudenz, and Thorn, which, with imposing force, barred its passage. Until they had so occupied this province and crossed the river, they could not be said to have made any substantial or effective progress towards a real invasion of Germany and the attainment of their goal, the occupation of Berlin. The task before our ally was under the circumstances well-nigh a superhuman one. So it was something more than creditable that they did in fact clear and occupy, for the time being, the extreme east of Eastern Prussia to such an extent that the interior, even as far as Berlin, was overwhelmed by a mighty flood of people in flight before the invaders. Von Hindenburg, reinforced also, was occupying the east of the Vistula in great strength, his army reaching even to Gumbinnen; and Königsberg had not yet even been threatened. In a day or so von Hindenburg was concentrating at Gumbinnen, and there receiving a great accession to his forces in the Germans who had been defeated at Lötzen and been pushed back by the Russians northward through the Mazurian Lakes.

On the 16th the Russians, who were in force at Stallupoenen with a view to advancing directly through Insterberg to Königsberg, came in contact with von Hindenburg and a very strong German army. As a fact, the proportion of the German army to that of the Russian was as three to two. A battle here took place, the Germans being represented by their First Army Corps. In the result the Russians obtained a decisive victory, and shook off so completely the German army there, that they were able to proceed northward towards Tilsit, clearing and occupying the whole of that region. How strenuous was this conflict, and how deadly, can be gathered from the fact that the Germans, who were conquered, themselves took more than 3,000 Russian prisoners and six machine guns, leaving behind on the field many other guns and much ammunition of the Russians, which the victors were forced, by reason of the speed with which they followed up their victory, to leave behind on the field of battle.

The Germans, having fallen back from Stallupoenen, now established themselves in enormous strength on the line Szillen-Gumbinnen-Goldap with the object of attempting to stay at any cost the advance in strength of the Russians on to Königsberg. Here a great battle—that of Gumbinnen—took place, which lasted for several days, the Germans pressing forward particularly towards and eventually reaching Pilkallen in the north, and meeting

a determined Russian offensive at Goldap in the south. At first the Germans were so successful in a part of this line that they were able to push forward to the frontier, even reaching Wirballen upon the line Königsberg-Kovno. Here they set up a severe resistance to the many Russian columns which were now seeking to cross the frontier to the aid of the Russian army at and in the neighbourhood of Stallupoenen. So, right along the line from the west of Stallupoenen to the frontier, fighting continued throughout the whole of the 18th and the 19th, ending, in this region, in most decisive victory to the Russians, the Germans being forced back to their original position.

The Russians now concentrated in great strength on and in the direction of the River Angerap to the north of the Stallupoenen-Insterberg railroad. Here they met, but could do little more than hold the enemy. But to the south more decisive operations were taking place. A great struggle was raging in the region south of Lake Mauer, where the Russians had entrenched themselves so strongly that the Germans were unable in their attack to make any impression upon them whatever. It was not, however, to be a case of stale-mate, for, new forces arriving to the assistance of the Russians, the Germans were here pushed back.

On the 20th the Russian line, its right resting on Pilkallen, ran southward to Goldap, though the centre of the operations and storm yet continued at Gumbinnen. The German line had shifted too, so that it lay parallel to the Russian. The struggle of each army now resolved itself into a desperate effort to envelop the other, Pilkallen and Goldap thus, in their turn, becoming centres of a fierce conflict. On the whole, probably about 400,000 men were engaged. Each of these two armies was strongly entrenched, and each was supported in the rear by an enormously powerful force of artillery. Each army belched forth a continuous fire of shell upon the other throughout the whole length of the line, the infantry on either side meanwhile making every effort with machine gun, rifle fire, grenade, and bayonet to dislodge the other from its trenches. Throughout the whole line the scene was one of veritable carnage, the Pilkallen and Goldap regions being nothing less than infernos. Here and there, at innumerable points along the line, particularly at Pilkallen, Gumbinnen, and Goldap, bodies of men, in the midst of a deadly hail of shell, were madly fighting, hand to hand, with rifle and bayonet.

And here, as in the fighting at the West, heroism and sacrifice were not wanting. Hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of heroic deeds were accomplished during this great struggle, but the heroes

were necessarily unknown, and did their deeds of glory without recognition—without even the limited recognition of their immediate colleagues. There was one case, however, which did, because of its peculiar nature and circumstances, attain a world-wide recognition and appreciation. The hero was a Russian Jew, and his reward was not only the St. George's Cross—the Russian equivalent of the Victoria Cross—which he received at the hands of the Czar himself, but the knowledge that by his act he had once for all raised his people to their proper place in the esteem of his nation. His name was Osnas. He was a medical student of Vilna. He was but a private in the Russian army, but he was in one of the many deadly hand-to-hand fights already referred to.

In an isolated body of Russian soldiery, struggling gallantly against an overwhelming enemy unit, was the Russian flag and its bearer. The Germans were concentrating all their efforts upon the capture of that flag, and incidentally the death of its bearer and those who would defend it; and their success was such that, with a bayonet through his heart, the standard bearer was forced to relax his death-stiffened grasp of the flag and thus yield it to the enemy. This deed done, the Germans were heartened and encouraged in their efforts, and, stimulated by their success, fought yet more desperately to defeat their opponents. But Osnas, hot with the fire that coursed through the veins of the Maccabeans, dashed alone into the thick of the German soldiers, and fought single-handed with the captor of his nation's flag. He seemed to have flung himself into the very arms of death, for, alone, he was surrounded by a German horde, who were determined to prevent the recapture of the hard-fought-for emblem. But Osnas fought with almost superhuman courage, and as if with the strength and skill of a dozen men; and escaping death, during the few moments which it took for the Russians to gather themselves together and come to his rescue, he was able to bayonet the German who held the flag, and seize it for his country. This heroism so stimulated the Russians that from that moment they fought with a renewed vigour, which turned what had been for them a losing fight into a complete victory.

By the 22nd the great battle of Gumbinnen was over, and Russia became the absolute victor in the first decisive engagement in the war. The Germans had failed altogether in their efforts to envelop their opponents' line, and failing, were themselves thrust back. They were, in fact, in full retreat, pressed closely by the Russians. Panic reigned throughout the whole of Eastern Prussia, all the inhabitants believing that at length the Russians

were in complete occupation of their country and that their advance could not be stayed by von Hindenburg. There had already been a great rush of refugees from this part of Prussia into the interior, but now that rush became universal and intense. Homes, villages, and towns were all abandoned, the people themselves anxious only to escape the invader. A quarter of a million refugees thronged the streets of Dantzig. Berlin, whither refugees had also fled, was deeply moved. The whole world, even, felt that now Germany, in her eastern territories, was completely in the hands and at the mercy of a victorious Russia.

Von Hindenburg retreated in two directions. One of his armies fell back through Tapiau towards Königsberg, the other retiring to the south-west towards Allenstein and the fortresses of Thorn and Graudenz. The Russians were free to act as they would in the far eastern regions of the province.

On the 25th the Russian offensive continued to develop, with yet increasing success. From that day to the 28th, fighting constantly such of the German forces as yet remained within reach, opposing their advance, the Russians progressed towards and ultimately reached and occupied the important town of Tilsit. At the town itself there was very little resistance to the Russian occupation, for the garrison, following the example of the civilian population, took flight almost at the first sight of the Russian army. Having thus occupied Tilsit, the victorious army made for Königsberg, and ultimately initiated an investment of that city. Here, however, they had a task of infinite difficulty. Königsberg was powerfully fortified and occupied by a garrison of 50,000 men. The reduction of the city, therefore, was an operation which obviously would require considerable time and great strength of force. Moreover, the Russians here were in a neighbourhood under the influence of the German naval domination of the Baltic. At the commencement they were successful, absolutely crushing the advance guards of the garrison and occupying a great number of the most important, strategically considered, fords of the River Alle. So satisfied were the Russians that they were well established in this part of Eastern Prussia, that they proceeded to establish postal communications between Riga and the many East Prussian towns of which they were in occupation, amongst these towns being such important centres as Insterberg. Leaving the investing army before Königsberg, the Russian main army continued its advance into the interior, following the railway line, and ultimately occupying Angerberg and Korschen.

Meanwhile the Germans were being strongly reinforced,

particularly that part of the army which had fallen back towards the south-west. The Russians, who had been following them up persistently, were now making a great effort to occupy the town of Allenstein, and for three days, from the 26th to the 29th, a great battle took place in this neighbourhood, resulting in yet another great Russian victory, their occupation of the town, and a further retreat of the Germans. This retreat continued as far westward as the Vistula, where, at Thorn and Graudenz, the German army established itself in great force with a view to yet another effort to stay the Russian advance. Russian patrols had even reached the river.

Backed up by the two great fortresses just named, von Hindenburg, having reorganised his army and its reinforcements, determined not only to await the Russians on the Vistula, but to push forward, and force conflict in the region of the Mazurian Lakes, in the neighbourhood of Osterode, midway between Allenstein and Graudenz.

This was von Hindenburg's great opportunity. He would be in a position to fight the Russians in a region where he could best deal with them. It was even said after the battle, which was now to take place, that von Hindenburg's retreat to the south-west had been a deliberate manœuvre on his part, designed to draw the Russian army into this region of lake, swamp, and wood, and there to annihilate it. Whether it was design or accident, it is at least certain that the German General was now able to attack the invaders in the one spot where they could least successfully oppose him.

Von Hindenburg waited until the German army was occupying a line the right of which rested on or near Osterode and the left on or near Soldau. The Russian army was accordingly resting on a line near and parallel to the railroad which ran from Soldau in the south to near Osterode in the north. This line of railway constituted one side of practically a square of railway lines running at the north from Osterode in the west to Allenstein in the east, and southward, from Allenstein to Ortelsburg, and thence eastward to Soldau. Roughly speaking, each side of this square was about fifty miles in length. The whole of the region enclosed by it was filled with lakes of various sizes and depths, bogs, and woods, with but one or two roads, and these very narrow, and with very few villages or towns.

Russia was forced, by circumstances, to take the offensive. This was exactly what von Hindenburg desired. He immediately developed the usual operation of the German General, and proceeded to attempt an envelopment of the Russian line, and

to bend it at each end. Against the Russian right at Osterode he hurled an immense force, and adopted the same tactics against the Russian left at Soldau. The Russian army, though it consisted of about 300,000 men, and notwithstanding its gallant and desperate resistance, was altogether outclassed and overborne by the immense weight of force of the Germans engaged in this operation, and of whom there were at least 400,000. Step by step the Russians were pushed back through the wooded morass within this quadrilateral of railroad, bent at each end of their line by the Germans so that as they retreated their line was crushed in, crumpled up and broken, to such an extent that they found themselves eventually in a triangular corner, to the east of which Ortelsburg was the apex, an absolutely disorganised and ineffective mass of men and material. From the Osterode-Soldau line, where they were originally confronted by the German army, this bending-in process continued right through towards Ortelsburg, and particularly at Tannenberg—which place gave its name to the battle—involving submission to an increasing German force on each side, north and south, as well as to the main enemy army at their front. The plight of the Russian army can well be imagined. Itself struggling in bogs and woods in an unknown country, its men were drowning or sunk up to their arms in bog or water, and its artillery, munitions, and material were stuck fast in bog or submerged entirely beneath water. Powerless, thus, effectively to use either rifle or bayonet, or heavy guns, the lot of these brave Russian soldiers was inevitable—to struggle through a living death in swamp and wood, and during the whole time to be the doomed subjects of a merciless hail of shell fire from the German guns, and of attack by an infantry which knew every inch of the ground.

By the beginning of September, with three of their Generals killed, including their Commander, Samsonov, the Russians found themselves as an army almost entirely annihilated. It had been simply and solely a question of each man for himself, to get as well as he could out of the swamp and the whole neighbourhood of the lakes, and to fall back to the frontier. There, fortunately, reinforcements enabled the shattered Russian remnants to make a stand.

In this manner did von Hindenburg justify his lifelong study of the region of the Mazurian Lakes, and gain the great victory of Tannenberg.

Printed in Great Britain by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury.